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ABSTRACT

This report examines the Chicago Mastery Learning Reading Program (CMLRP) and other schoolwide approaches at selected schools in Los Angeles (California), New York City, and Chicago (Illinois) to identify factors in augmented achievement gains. This extended summary and conclusion seeks to provide information which can improve the general effectiveness of inner-city elementary and intermediate schools. Chapter one presents CMLRP components and potential advantages for big city students. Chapter two discusses CMLRP implementation in New York Community District 19 by giving the program's history and chronology, district-level instructional and organizational processes, and data on reading achievement. CMLRP implementation at individual schools in New York and Chicago are compared in chapter three. Chapter four describes five schools using schoolwide approaches in Los Angeles and Chicago to improve instruction for students in concentrated poverty neighborhoods. Schoolwide approaches are defined as elimination of Title I pullout arrangements that fragment the education of low achievers. Finally, chapter five summarizes and discusses those school arrangements and processes identified with improved achievement in inner-city elementary schools. (ML)

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A Study of the Chicago Mastery Learning Reading Program and Other School-wide Approaches for Improving Reading at Selected Schools in Chicago, Los Angeles, and New York

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EXTENDED SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

INSTRUCTIONAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS AND PROCESSES FOR IMPROVING ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AT INNER CITY ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

I. Introduction

Rationale and Purpose

During the past five years, much attention has been given to the topic of unusually "successful" or "effective" big city elementary schools, generally defined as schools at which academic achievement is higher than expected given the socioeconomic composition of the student body. In particular, many efforts have been made to identify the characteristics of unusually successful inner city elementary schools (i.e., schools with a relatively high proportion of poverty students). As a consequence, there is now a large literature on successful urban elementary schools, and much has been learned concerning the probable reasons for their success.[1,2]

Unfortunately, however, studies of unusually effective urban elementary schools have not quite reached the state of providing much specific guidance for improving achievement in other schools. It now seems fairly well established, for example, that outstanding leadership is required from a building principal or some other administrator and that instructional goals and activities must be focused on attainable objectives (see the PDK study cited above), but in general it is still unclear how instructional and organizational arrangements and processes to effectively focus instruction can be implemented on a widespread basis in big city schools.

In this context, several promising efforts are now being carried out to improve academic achievement and create more successful inner city schools in big city school districts. One of the most encouraging efforts along these lines involves the development and implementation of materials to teach reading comprehension skills through the mastery learning approach in New York and Chicago. Another particularly important effort involves school-wide approaches for improving achievement through systematic school-by-school planning in Title I schools in Los Angeles and other cities. These approaches raise a number of important questions involving instructional and organizational arrangements and processes required for successful widespread implementation of improved instructional practices in big city schools. The purpose of the project reported herein was to examine these approaches in practice in order to provide information that can help educators elsewhere in substantially improving the effectiveness of inner city elementary and intermediate schools.

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[1] _Why Do Some Urban Schools Succeed?_ Bloomington, Indiana: Phi Delta Kappa, 1980, pp. 203-208.

[2] Lawrence W. Lezotte, _et. al._, _School Learning Climate and Student Achievement_. Tallahassee, Florida: The Site Specific Technical Assistance Center, Florida State University Foundation, 1980, p. 55.

The Chicago Mastery Learning Reading Program (CMLRP)

One of the major problems that has confronted big city schools for several decades is that of developing reading comprehension and thinking skills of students in the elementary grades. This problem is particularly acute at inner city schools where average reading achievement typically is almost two grade levels below national norms by the time students reach the sixth or seventh grade. Even where compensatory education has raised reading performance in the primary grades, gains generally are not sustained when students enter the middle grades where "mechanical" skills such as spelling and word decoding begin to be de-emphasized in favor of comprehension and abstract thinking.[3]

In the past few years, several approches have been developed to improve the teaching of reading comprehension for urban students. Probably the most systematic of these approaches is embodied in the Chicago Mastery Learning Reading Progarm (CMLRP) for students in elementary and intermediate grades. Mastery learning is a term generally applied to efforts to build a system of learning objectives and procedures for instruction, classroom management, and record-keeping to ensure that students master specific skills. A major goal is to break instruction into small units that most students can master in a reasonable period of time. This type of approach, which assumes that most students can learn more than they do now, is aimed partly at providing success experiences which in turn motivate students to learn. Approximately 3,000 schools in the United States now use some form of mastery learning,[4] but most approaches are local efforts that have relatively few materials to assist teachers in developing students' comprehension and abstract thinking skills.[5]

The Chicago Mastery Learning Reading Program differs from most other mastery learning approaches partly in that it has involved intensive work to develop instructional materials designed and tested for effectiveness with students in big city schools. The system now includes Skills Units (Word Attack and Study Skills) and Comprehension Units corresponding to skills typically taught in grades K-8 and was published in 1980 and 1981 by the Mastery Education Corporation of Watertown, Massachusetts. Suggested usage is to have ten periods of reading per week and to use three or four of these periods for the development of comprehension skills. (The remaining periods are used for basic skill development and other reading objectives.) The materials for each grade are divided into instructional units. Each unit has four component parts as follows: I. Group Instruction: _Teacher Activities_ and _Student Activities_; II. Formative Tests; III. Correctives/Extensions: _Additional Activities_, _Enrichment Activities_, and _Extra Activities_; and IV. _Criterion-Referenced Tests_.

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[3] _R & D Speaks in Reading: Research for Practitioners_. Proceedings of a Reading Conference, Southwest Educational Development Laboratory, Austin, Texas, May, 1979.

[4] Joan S. Human and S. Alan Cohen, "Learning for Mastery: Ten Conclusions After 15 Years and 3,000 Schools," _Educational Leadership_ (November 1979), pp. 104-109.

[5] Beau Fly Jones, "Maximizing Learning for Low Achieving Students: An Argument for Learning Strategies and Mastery Learning Instruction. Paper presented at the Annual Summer Instructional Leadership Conference of the American Association of School Administrators, Chicago, July 1980.

Altogether, 194 units are now available in the published set of CMLRP materials. The CMLRP consists of Levels A through N designed to correspond in difficulty with skills typically specified for instruction in urban classrooms from kindergarten through grade eight. Grade-level designations for each level of the program usually require some modification in terms of the situation in a given class, school, or school district.

Important potential advantages which have been cited as making the CMLRP particularly suitable and promising for improving the achievement of big city students--particularly economically disadvantaged students at predominantly poverty schools--include the following: (1) the CMLRP is explicitly designed to provide methods and materials for teaching comprehension skills; (2) the CMLRP specifically builds in strategies designed to help students learn to learn; (3) the CMLRP is designed to be primarily group-based rather than for individualized instruction; (4) the CMLRP provides specific, step-by-step instructions for overburdened teachers; (5) the CMLRP is specifically designed and field-tested to address the particular instructional problems in schools with large numbers of low-achieving students; (6) the CMLRP may facilitate appropriate pacing of instruction for disadvantaged students; (7) the CMLRP may help students perceive that they are accomplishing something in school; (8) the CMLRP can help overcome instructional problems associated with basal readers; and (9) the CMLRP is suitable for school districts with a high rate of school mobility.

Given these potential advantages of the CMLRP, it is important to know whether and--even more important--how it is being implemented successfully in big city school districts. To provide preliminary answers to these questions, we studied district-level as well as school-level implementation in Community District 19 in New York, and school-level implementation at one inner city elementary school in Chicago. (Chicago does not provide a good site to study district-level implementation because until 1981, only one school was implementing the CMLRP on a school-wide basis. The district is now making arrangements to disseminate CMLRP materials to hundreds of schools but as of August, 1981, had not determined how much in supporting services would be provided to facilitate effective implementation.) Data were collected through interviews with school administrators, teachers, and support personnel at these sites, and through examination of relevant documents such as in-service training plans, meeting agendas, criterion-referenced testing records, and bulletins for teachers.

Because the explicit intent of this study is to provide preliminary information and conclusions as soon as possible, site visits and interviews necessarily were limited and conclusions generally depended on perceptions and judgements, our own as well as respondents', rather than "hard" data. Nevertheless, we believe the information and conclusions regarding instructional and organizational arrangements and processes which are being developed and tested at schools we visited in New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles will be useful to educators elsewhere who are struggling with the difficult problem of improving the academic achievement of students attending poverty schools in big cities.

II. The CMLRP in New York Community District 19

History and Chronology

Although the CMLRP has been developed as an integral part of the mastery-based continuous progress learning system in the Chicago Public Schools, the best large test of the program is being carried out in New York Community District 19 (inner city Brooklyn) which includes 21 elementary schools (either K-5, K-6, or K-6) and six intermediate schools. Eighteen of the 21 elementary schools receive Title I funds.[6] Following the initiative of District Superintendent Frank C. Arricale, II, administrators, teachers, and UFT representatives from District 19 travelled to Chicago to learn more about the program and then arranged for its implementation in third-, fourth-, and eighth-grade classrooms during the 1979-80 school year. This implementation must be classified as partial inasmuch as materials had to be duplicated for delivery to the schools, and adequate materials for classroom use frequently were not available until well into the winter or even the spring of 1980. Thus district officials considered 1979-1980 as a pilot year which helped them prepare for wider implementation in the fall of 1981. Some of the chronologically-overlapping major steps leading to district-wide implementation during the 1980-1981 academic year were as follows:

1. District Superintendent Arricale and his staff decided that a more concentrated and comprehensive approach to instruction was needed to raise achievement in the district, particularly with respect to reading and other basic skills. This decision was encouraged by research indicating that Title I "pullout" programs which take students out of regular classrooms for special instruction generally should be avoided because they tend to be fragmented in their operation and impact on achievement. The decision to develop a comprehensive reading program based on the principles of mastery learning also was stimulated and reinforced by the fact that the New York City United Federation of Teachers has been strongly supportive of mastery learning approaches for improving achievement in urban classrooms.

2. The district office staff was reorganized in line with Superintendent Arricale's view of changes required to make classroom instruction more effective. Key aspects of this reorganization included: (a) establishment of a structure providing for Directors of Curriculum, Reading and Language Arts, Mathematics, Fiscal Affairs, Bilingual Education, Personnel, and Pupil Personnel. The directors function directly under Superintendent Arricale, as part of a "flat" hierarchy designed to keep him well informed about concrete developments in the district and to encourage continuing, day-to-day interaction and cooperation across offices and functions; and (b) four new persons were appointed to fill a corresponding number of positions.

3. Primary responsibility for developing and implementing a comprehensive mastery-learning-based reading program was given to Leon Weisman, Director of Reading and Language Arts, and his staff which included five full-time Staff Development Specialists. Four of the Staff Developers work with elementary

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[6] Racial-ethnic composition of District 19 enrollment is approximately 54 percent black, forty percent Hispanic, four percent "other" white, and two percent Asian American.

schools, and one works with the intermediate schools. Each also takes special responsibility for particular language-arts activities or subjects such as teaching of writing, materials for parents, criterion-referenced testing, oral-aural instruction, and learning strategies theory and implementation.

4. After reviewing materials available for teaching reading in big city schools, Superintendent Arricale and other administrators as well as teachers and representatives of the United Federation of Teachers and the New York City Teacher Center Consortium went to Chicago to learn more about the CMLRP and considerations involved in implementing it in the schools. With strong endorsement from United Federation of Teachers President Albert Shanker, district officials decided to adopt the CMLRP as the key component in its comprehensive reading program.

5. An overall definition of components was provided to guide development and implementation of the district's comprehensive Mastery Learning Reading Program at each school. Basic components were described and discussed as follows:

A. The Basic Components: The three parts of the MLR are Comprehension Units, Skills Units and the basal reader.

   1. The basal reader is to be used for vocabulary, stories and story-related activities only - the skills work and workbooks are not used as part of the program, but they could be used as enrichment activities for students who do well on the formative tests.
   2. The Skills and Comprehension units contain the materials described in the previous section. These are worked on independent of each other and independent of work in the reader.

B. Integration of Components

   1. Of time devoted to reading, one-third should be spent on each of the three parts: reading, skills, and comprehension.
   2. Think of the reading week as consisting of 10 segments (2 per day). Three or four of these should be spent in each of the three activities.
   3. Progress to a new story, skills unit, or comprehension unit should depend only on completion of the last unit or story. If a comprehension unit is completed, for example, a new one should be started at the next scheduled comprehension segment rather than waiting to complete a skills unit.[7]

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[7] Leon Weisman and Beau Jones (eds.), Mastery Learning in Reading: Handbook of Procedures. Brooklyn, New York: Community School District 19, p. 3. "Reading" refers to use of a basal reader, directed reading, teacher-prepared units, and other reading approaches to complement the CMLRP.

6. The role of materials complementary to the CMLRP as part of the comprehensive reading progarm was further spelled out as follows under the heading, "Instructional Process Strategies": "Basal Readers: Continued use in all classrooms for vocabulary development, concept formation, appreciational and interest skills, oral language development, story-telling, and choral speaking. Basal reader will represent 40% of the total instructional time in reading. Directed Reading: Based on research, all developmental basal lessons must follow a systematic approach. Expanded Comprehension: Our Keys for Change widens the scope of comprehension practices to include cloze techniques, contextual strategies and organization. Silent reading techniques will be stressed this year in an effort to increase reading for meaning. Writing Program: Teacher trainers will receive specific training in the Weehawken method and will use their own 'cluster-classes' to introduce the system. Intensive writing practices will be introduced by the trainers in all schools for classroom and home writing exercises."[8]

7. District officials decided in the spring of 1980 to place a full-time Resident Trainer (i.e., teacher trainer) in each school to help teachers learn to implement the CMLRP and the comprehensive reading program. This decision was made after many meetings with principals which were conducted in order to work out comprehensive plans for instructional improvement in each school (see #10 below). The job description for the position of Resident Trainer included the following components: "facilitating the implementation of the reading curriculum design for basic and supplemental instruction programs; planning and developing model lessons to assist teachers and supervisors; performing classroom demonstration lessons on a regularly scheduled basis; training and assisting teachers in the use of reading and writing materials in an active involvement setting."

8. During the summer of 1980 district officials decided to introduce the Weehawken Writing System as a key component in the comprehensive reading program and to have the Resident Trainers devote ten periods per week to staff development tasks in connection with its implementation. The Weehawken Writing System is a promising approach for teaching urban students through "structured writing," which was developed and field tested between 1976 and 1979 in the Weehawken, New Jersey Public Schools. It was selected for emphasis in the comprehensive reading program due to its potential for improving critical language arts skills that receive little or no emphasis in the CMLRP. The decision to assign ten periods per week of the time of the Resident Trainers to this task enabled District 19 to begin to introduce the Weehawken system without having to find an additional $220,000 (approximate figure) for related staff development.

9. A decision also was reached during the summer to structure the time and responsibilities of full-time Reading Teachers in support of the CMLRP and the comprehensive reading program at every Title I school. Prior to this time, most of the schools in District 19 had at least one full-time Reading Teacher paid through Title I or other sources, but questions existed as to their effectiveness in various "pullout" approaches, the degree to which they made a maximum

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[8] Leon Weisman, "District Design for Comprehensive Reading Services 1980-81 School Year." Community School District 19, pp. 2-3.

contribution toward the solution of critical learning problems of students, and the extent to which their efforts were fragmented and channelled into emergency duties (such as replacing absent teachers) in some of the schools.

The Reading Teachers are assigned to the sixth grade in elementary schools which have a sixth grade, and to the fifth grade in those which do not. The fundamental concept behind their assignment is that they will provide "parallel" instruction at these levels, generally taking responsibility for developing the reading skills of the lowest achieving students from the third and the fifth or sixth grades. At the same time, this approach reduces the class size (usually from about 30 to about 15) of the regular teacher who has the lowest achieving group of third and fifth or sixth graders, thus making his or her task much more feasible than otherwise would be true.

10. The preceding decisions were made possible by an earlier decision to reorganize local, state, and federal resources in support of a comprehensive reading program constructed to a significant degree around the work of the Staff Developers, Resident Trainers, and Reading Teachers. This decision required many significant changes in programming and staffing, such as a reduction in the number of district paraprofessionals--many of whom previously assisted in "pull-out" programs--from approximately 300 in 1979-80 to less than 70 in 1980-81.[9] It also required systematic planning and reprogramming in every school, in order to integrate and coordinate special programs such as bilingual education, special education, and "intervention" rooms (alternative classrooms for low-achieving fourth graders), with the CMLRP and other aspects of the comprehensive reading program. As part of these plans, principals had to identify and determine the most important expenditure requirements in their schools, for example, whether their funds would be spent most productively on an assistant principal, an assistant-to-the-principal, a reading or math resource teacher, or for some other purpose. Approval for each schools' comprehensive plan was given by the district office only after each principal met during the summer of 1980 with Superintendent Arricale and appropriate district staff to discuss the details of his or her proposal.

11. Formal teacher training in connection with the comprehensive reading program, particularly the CMLRP, has been continuing and extensive. Formal training activities of this kind have included the following: (a) Early in the 1979-80 school year, all third- and fourth-grade teachers participated in training sessions conducted by district staff and developers of the CMLRP; (b) In September of 1980, approximately 500 teachers (k-8) participated in three full days of in-service training; (c) In cooperation with the United Federation of Teachers, District 19 helped sponsor and pay for college-credit courses and workshops on mastery learning instruction; and (d) Systematic training in mastery learning, the CMLRP, and related topics was provided for the Resident Trainers.

District-level Instructional and Organizational Arrangements and Processes

The preceding account of the introduction of the CMLRP in District 19 described several organizational actions and developments which contributed positively to success of the program. These actions and developments included: (1) a strong initiative and continuing visible support from Superintendent Frank Arricale; (2) continuing support from the United Federation of Teachers including participation of UFT officers in selection of the CMLRP, cooperation with the union in teacher training and staff development, and a strong endorsement from UFT President Albert Shanker; and (3) creation of a district-wide organizational structure specifically providing for five Staff Developers, a Resident Trainer in each school, and a full-time Reading Teacher whose function was explicitly articulated with the CMLRP in each Title I school.

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[9] Most paraprofessionals in District 19 now provide tutorial assistance to second and fourth graders who can benefit from additional help in reading.

Respondents whom we interviewed agreed that these three aspects of organizational functioning were crucial in working to achieve successful implementation of the CMLRP. Several of our respondents also felt that the meetings held with principals concerning the details of development and implementation of their comprehensive reading programs were particularly important in demonstrating that district-level administrators were committed to and insistent on a new approach and in providing early information to district-level decision makers concerning the adequacy of initial plans for improved instruction in the schools. As an example of the importance of the meetings with principals, several respondents pointed out that the decision to place a full-time trainer in each school emerged from the problem-solving discussions with the principals and their key staff.

In addition to the organizational developments described above, at least five other aspects of organizational functioning were particularly important in implementing the CMLRP in District 19. These five aspects were as follows:

1. Thursday meetings with the Resident Trainers. Beginning soon after the start of the 1980-81 academic year, the Resident Trainers met at the district office every Thursday afternoon from one to three p.m. These meetings were planned and conducted by staff of the Office of Reading and Language Arts, and served a variety of purposes: (a) they enabled the Trainers and district staff to raise and seek solutions to instructional problems and to share their experience and insights in working to implement the CMLRP and the comprehensive reading program; (b) they helped the district staff and the Trainers identify and understand the most important problems that were arising with respect to district-wide implementation; (c) they allowed for regular in-service training of the Trainers; (d) they provided additional evidence of the district's commitment to and insistence on successful implementation; (e) by requiring that every Trainer attend every week, they underlined the fact that the Trainers have responsibilities to the district office; and (f) they thereby provided the Trainers with additional status to help them achieve their goals within their individual schools.

2. Integrity of the role of the Resident Trainers. District officials anticipated that it would be difficult to make sure the Resident Trainers really would devote themselves primarily to providing language-arts staff development in all the schools. Particularly since many or most of the Resident Trainers had been encouraged to apply by their principals and were outstanding individuals within their schools, principals might be tempted to assign them a variety of responsibilities which could be important to the school but might have little or nothing to do with the comprehensive reading program. This tendency has been a serious problem in many Title I programs as well as other special projects that provide additional personnel for inner city schools. To counteract this tendency, District 19 instructional arrangements and processes have included the following:

(a) clear directives both in writing and orally at principals' meetings have stressed that Resident Trainers are to devote themselves primarily to the comprehensive reading program; (b) equally important, the Staff Developers as well as the Director of Reading and Language Arts spend a great deal of time in the schools and thus become aware of serious violations of the policy; (c) implementation of the CMLRP provides for regular monitoring which fairly quickly shows whether Resident Trainers are proceeding to provide teachers with introductory materials for classroom implementation; this approach to monitoring (which is described at some length below) calls attention to situations in which Trainers may be proceeding too slowly because they are carrying out other tasks; and (d) funding arrangements require that logs be kept showing how the Trainers distribute their time, in order to assign funds appropriately to federal, state, and local sources.

3. Meetings with the assistant principals. Periodic meetings at the district office also were held with assistant principals who were given part of the responsibility for implementing the CMLRP and the comprehensive reading program.[10] Depending on the school, assistant principals in District 19 are responsible for supervisory tasks involving one or more aspects of the instructional program. With certification qualifying them to evaluate teachers, assistant pincipals in many New York City schools take primary responsibility for classroom observations and conferences held with teachers and other staff as part of the annual evaluation process. Given the fact that reading was the highest priority instructional effort in District 19 schools in 1980-81, assistant principals clearly needed to be well informed concerning the nature and functioning of the CMLRP and the comprehensive reading program.

The meetings for assistant principals and other principals' assistants were particularly important and productive because they clarified administrative responsibilities for monitoring implementation of the CMLRP. After studying midyear charts showing progress of the program at each school (see below), the assistant principals and the district staff concluded that progress generally had been greatest in schools where implementation was being most closely monitored; following this determination, many of the assistant principals redoubled their efforts to monitor program implementation in their own schools.

Meetings and discussions with the assistant principals also helped to clarify difficult issues involved in trying to monitor the CMLRP. For example, it frequently is difficult to decide how to work with teachers who could benefit from help from the Resident Trainer. Should the evaluator (the assistant principal or the principal) ask the Trainer to work intensively with a teacher whom supervisory conferences indicate is proceeding too slow or too fast in introducing CMLRP units? Should the evaluators rely on information from the Trainer--who passes out the CMLRP units and tests--to identify teachers who are pacing instruction inefficiently? Should the assistant principal or principal simply tell such a teacher that the Trainer will work with him or her because performance has been unsatisfactory, or instead meet with the teacher and the Trainer? Assistant principals discussed these types of questions and then made decisions they thought most appropriate for their particulat situations.

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[10] Assistant principals are assigned to New York City elementary schools enrolling more than 500 students. However, all District 19 schools have an assistant principal assigned as part of the district's overal educational program.

4. Monitoring and feedback activities of staff reporting to the district office. Monitoring of on-going developments has been emphasized throughout District 19 efforts to install the CMLRP and the comprehensive reading program. In addition to in-school monitoring provided by principals and assistant principals, monitoring and feedback activities in connection with implementation of the CMLRP have included the following:

-- Staff Developers regularly observe and confer with teachers concerning mastery-learning instruction in the classroom.

-- Resident Trainers are responsible for distributing units of instruction and formative tests as needed by classroom teachers. By maintaining records concerning the materials which have been requested by teachers and by compiling class teachers' lists indicating the mastery-learning history and status of each student, the Resident Trainers collect up-to-date data that show where teachers at each grade level stand with respect to implementation of the program. Conferences with individual teachers and small groups of teachers also provide the Resident Trainers with valuable information concerning adequacy of implementation (e.g., problems in pacing instruction and administering formative tests) in each classroom and the school as a whole.

-- The Director of Reading and Language Arts has visited hundreds of classrooms to talk with teachers and students concerning their reactions to the CMLRP and to observe its implementation.

-- Questionnaires to teachers have provided information useful in planning modifications and in improving subsequent implementation of the program.

-- Staff in the Office of Reading and Language Arts collect summary class-level information on implementation three times during the academic year. This is accomplished by preparing a chart which shows the numbers of students working at various levels of the CMLRP in every classroom. Since most District 19 elementary schools are organized homogeneously (primarily according to standardized-test reading scores and teacher designation), district staff can compare patterns across schools for students at differing achievement levels. Placing all these data on single-page charts makes it possible to identify schools or classes in which students are proceeding more slowly or more rapidly than are students at similar achievement levels elsewhere in the district. This information in turn raises questions concerning appropriate pacing at the district, school and classroom levels, and identifies schools and classrooms where additional attention and assistance may be required to implement the program successfully.

5. Actions to provide support and security for school staff. While working to implement the CMLRP, Superintendent Arricale and other district officials have made a special effort to bolster school security arrangements and otherwise provide supportive services for teachers in the schools. The rationale for these actions has been partly that they are desirable in and of themselves, and partly that such actions are particularly important and required when one asks teachers to make fundamental changes in their classroom practices. Actions along these lines have included the following: (a) alternative-school arrangements for disruptive students have been introduced; (b) more security guards

have been added and their hours have been increased; (c) parking arrangements have been improved and made more secure; (d) professional training for security guards has been provided; (e) individual school security plans have been developed and implemented; and (f) closed-circuit T.V. security systems have been installed.

Finally, there were several other considerations that some of our respondents believed were important in implementing the CMLRP in District 19. First, the Director of Reading and Language Arts (Leon Weisman) had been an assistant principal and, briefly, principal in District 19; this background not only gave him some credibility in the district but familiarized him with the kinds of problems likely to arise in administering a new district program.

Second, there has been close and continuing cooperation between the Office of Curriculum (directed by Harvey Weintraub) and the Office of Reading and Language Arts. This cooperation in turn has been vitally important in working to develop a coherent, consistent approach to language arts instruction in District 19 classrooms.

Third, the Staff Developers have worked very well together as a team and have provided each other with a good deal of professional and personal support in developing district-wide plans for implementation of the CMLRP. Given the day-to-day obstacles and frustrations that are bound to arise in this type of effort, it is difficult to overemphasize the importance of having a compatible team of persons who can help each other maintain their morale and improve their professional skills.

Fourth, because district and school staff had to duplicate CMLRP materials (most of the publisher's units were not available until 1981), many participants had a greater sense of ownership in the implementation and more communications with other participants (e.g., between Staff Developers, Resident Trainers, and teachers) than otherwise might have true. District 19 officials hope to maintain a high level of ownership and communications in other ways now that the published materials are available.

1981 Reading Achievement

Improvements in reading scores associated with implementation of the CMLRP and the comprehensive reading program in District 19 have been described in the district's Summer, 1981 report titled "Reading Analysis. School Years 1978-81." Data on Spring achievement excluding students classified as Limited English Proficiency (LEP) were presented as follows:

	1979 (N=16,834)	1980 (N=16,165)	1981 (N=15,842)
Percent at or above grade level[11]	29.8	36.3	40.7
Percent 0-1 year below grade level	25.0	26.6	26.2
Percent 1-2 years below grade level	25.2	21.0	20.5
Percent 2 or more years below grade level	20.0	16.1	12.6

As indicated in these data, District 19 has not somehow "solved" the problem of low inner-city school achievement in a period of two years. However, educationally significant changes have been registered in the percent of students scoring at or above grade level and in the percent scoring far below grade level. Thus there was a reduction of twelve percentage points (from 45 percent, to 33 percent) in the percentage of students scoring one or more years below grade level. This constitutes a reduction of 27 percent in the proportion of students who read so poorly as to significantly impede their opportunities to succeed in other subjects.

It also should be noted that the greatest absolute reductions in below grade-level achievement have come in the intermediate grades. This is because poverty students have tended to fall further behind grade-level as they proceed through school. Introduction of the comprehensive reading program and the CMLRP appears to have partially counteracted this cumulating deficit. Grade-by-grade percentages in the percent of non-LEP students scoring two or more years below grade level in 1979, 1980, and 1981 were as follows:

Grade	1979	1980	1981
2	1.0	.9	.5
3	11.5	4.1	3.3
4	11.2	7.1	6.2
5	17.5	9.8	9.5
6	28.8	21.0	18.1
7	33.8	31.7	23.4
8	34.8	36.4	24.0
9	31.9	30.1	18.0

As shown, in 1979 the percentage of students scoring two years or more below grade level steadily increased from grade four through grade eight. In 1981, by way of contrast, only 9.5 percent of fifth graders were reading two or more years below grade level as compared with 17.5 percent in 1979, and only about twenty percent of sixth-through-ninth-graders were reading this poorly in 1981, as compared with approximately 31 percent in 1979.

Another pattern present in the preceding data on low-achieving students is that the largest gains generally were registered during the year of the introduction of the CMLRP. Thus the largest declines in the percentages of third and fourth graders reading two years or more below grade level were registered in 1979-80, and the largest declines for seventh, eighth, and ninth graders were resgistered in 1980-81.

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[11] Grade-level achievement is defined as the grade-equivalent score in years and months. Thus a grade level score for a sixth grader tested in the eighth month of the school year is 6.8. Data are for the California Reading Achievement Test. It should be noted that elementary reading achievement has improved throughout New York City between 1979 and 1981, as city and state officials have pushed for the initiation of a more comprehensive approach (i.e., reducing "pull-out" arrangements) and other improvements in reading instruction.

Conversely, gains in the upper portion (at or above grade levels) of the achievement distribution have tended to be greatest among students who have been participating in CMLRP instruction for more than one year. Grade-by-grade change in the percentage of students reading at or above grade level has been as follows:

Grade	1979	1980	1981
2	36.5	41.0	41.0
3	23.0	33.0	43.5
4	27.5	36.2	36.3
5	31.0	40.3	43.0
6	28.6	39.9	41.3
7	29.0	31.0	39.8
8	31.8	31.5	38.7
9	39.8	45.4	47.3

These data show that third, fifth, and sixth graders registered the largest gains (20.5, 12, and 12.7 percentage points, respectively) between 1979 and 1981 in the percent of students reading at or above grade level. Two of these three grades included students who had been in the CMLRP for more than one year. While District 19 still faces a substantial challenge in consolidating and further extending gains associated with the CMLRP and the comprehensive reading program, district officials have been pleased with results to date. Thus District 19's 1981 reading achievement evaluation committee directed by Marsha Menahem (Assistant Director of Reimburseable Programs) summarized the current situation as follows: "We can safely assume that our new reading strategies, especially the Chicago Mastery approach combined with the expansion of our teacher training facilities, have produced the dramatic progress we are witnessing. The district is therefore being prudent in continuing, improving and strengthening our present language arts program and reaffirming and expanding our commitment to staff training."

Future Issues

Now that District 19 has had a full year of experience in district-wide implementation of the CMLRP and the comprehensive reading program, a number of issues involving organizational processes and arrangements required for continuing progress have begun to be clarified. The most improtant of these issues are the following: (1) How can the district office encourage more sharing of teachers'experience and ideas within schools? (2) Should the district office require that teacher evaluators (i.e., principals and assistant principals) make more visits to classrooms and hold more teacher conferences bearing on implementation of the CMLRP and the comprehensive reading program? (3) Are additional Resident Trainers and Reading Teachers needed in the larger schools, perhaps on a part-time basis? (4) Can the Reading Teachers be used more effectively as a resource within the schools? (5) How should the CMLRP be integrated with the New York City student promotions (i.e., "gates") policy? (6) How can higher-order cognitive skills be taught more effectively? and (7) Should District 19 mandate the usage of a particular basal reader for all the elementary schools?

Discussion

The preceding sections have described some of the instructional and organizational arrangements and processes that have been associated with apparently-successful implementation of the CMLRP on a district-wide basis at inner city elementary schools in New York City Community District 19. We cannot say that the CMLRP and the comprehensive reading program definitely have been successful at every elementary school; adequacy of implementation clearly is dependent on policies and practices at each school. Nevertheless, district-level arrangements and processes seem to have set the stage (i.e., made it relatively easy) for successful implementation at the school level.

If this conclusion is correct, district-level actions in District 19 should be compatible with or, at least, explainable in terms of previous research on conditions associated with success in implementing instructional innovation. We will not attempt to review all the research on this enormous topic, but instead will cite several studies summarizing a large body of research on instructional innovation, and then briefly discuss the District 19 situation with respect to these findings from other research.

One of the most concise summaries of research on instructional innovation has been provided by Michael Fullan and Allan Pomfret as part of an extensive review of the literature available as of 1977. Fullan and Pomfret identified the following five factors as being particularly important for successful implementation of an instructional innovation:

> (1) Any proposed change must be clearly understood by users in the local school . . .; (2) Successful implementation usually depends upon intensive in-service training . . . specifically directed to the changes being introduced; (3) School personnel need adequate time, materials, and facilities during implementation . . .; (4) Continuous feedback on implementation efforts is also desirable . . .; (5) The extent to which an innovation meets local needs, as perceived by school personnel, is related to successful implementation.[12]

Taking these generalizations one by one, we believe the following conclusions are justified by the data we collected in District 19:

1. The CMLRP is relatively clearly understood by teachers and other staff in District 19. Compared to many other instructional approaches such as discovery learning or learning-style based instruction, the CMLRP utilizes a structured set of materials and follows a fairly clear set of learning principles which teachers and other users can readily understand.

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[12] Michael Fullan and Alan Pomfret, "Research on Curriculum and Instruction Implementation," Review of Educational Research, v. 47 (1977), p. 337.

2. Relative to nearly all other district-wide efforts that have been made to improve achievement at inner city schools, District 19 implementation of the CMLRP and the comprehensive reading program has entailed substantial, continuous in-service training focused specifically on the changes being introduced.

3. Although an observer might raise questions concerning the adequacy of time, materials, and facilities devoted to implementation of the CMLRP and the comprehensive reading program, compared to many other innovations these aspects of implementation received a great deal of attention and resources in District 19.

4. Continuous monitoring and feedback have been stressed in district-level implementation, and program modifications have been and are still being made as a result. In addition, the overall organizational structure (e.g., employment of Staff Developers and Resident Trainers) has been explicitly designed to obtain relevant data through monitoring and feedback.

5. To a significant degree, the CMLRP and other components of the comprehensive reading program have won acceptance from teachers, administrators, and other school personnel on the basis that they meet the specific needs of students and teachers at inner city schools. Time after time respondents told us that they had seen both students and teachers responding more prositively to the CMLRP than had been true with respect to materials previously in use.

A recent study of discontinuation of instructional innovations at five elementary schools also identified some of the factors that affect success or failure in implementation. Well in line with other research that guided the study, the researcher found that the following characteristics were associated with failure to implement and discontinuation:

> . . . (1) the school districts were loosely coupled - meaning considerable autonomy existed among the various levels; (2) Few problems targeted for improvement were identified by the formal administrative structure and were in response to political demands from constituent groups; (3) . . . the training provided for teachers was essentially technical; (4) There was an 'informal covenant' at the school level that allowed teachers to decide which parts of the new programs to use and frustrated any attempt to standardize the instructional program; and (5) The plans for implementation, either by members of the NDN [National Diffusion Network] or at the local school site, did not consider the importance of the informal structure involved and thus made no provision for the cultural adaptation that might have allowed for implementation to proceed smoothly.[13]

This analysis of common problems reponsible for the failure of innovations selected by persons other than the teachers who were to implement them provides a useful framework for viewing District 19's organizational processes and arrangements in introducing the CMLRP. First, District 19's implementation overcame some of the obstacles associated with the "loose coupling" characteristics of public school districts. Although loose coupling undoubtedly has been a key reason for the failure of countless efforts at centrally-originated innovations in public education,[14] the implication of this generalization is not that central direction necessarily is ineffective or undesirable, but rather that innovations must be selected and implemented in a way that overcomes the dysfunctional aspects of loose coupling. By mandating the CMLRP and the comprehensive reading program district-wide but then also providing sufficient resources, supervision, and training to allow for successful implementation, District 19 officials recognized the dangers of loose coupling and took action to overcome them.

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[13] Ralph Parish, The Anatomy of Discontinuation, Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Oregon, 1981, p. 140.

Second, since the problem targeted for improvement involved low reading achievement in an inner-city school district, there was relatively widespread agreement on the potential value of a decisive district-level mandate. Since it was difficult to disagree with the assertion that improved reading achievement must be a priority goal, teachers and other personnel in the schools probably were relatively willing to follow a district mandate, provided that the approach selected appeared promising and that adequate professional and personal support was available to help them succeed.

Third, the staff development for District 19 teachers was much more than just "technical" training provided by outside experts. In particular, staff development was provided by full-time Trainers who generally were widely respected by the teachers with whom they worked.

Fourth, District 19 efforts to implement the CMLRP included components that can help overcome the "informal covenant" that frequently functions to block school-level implementation of an instructional innovation. These efforts included arrangements providing for regular classroom visits on the part of assistant principals, teacher trainers, and district-level supervisors, and, more important, have provided for the frequent collection of data (e.g., on student performance level in the CMLRP) bearing on classroom implementation of the program. While these arrangements do not and cannot entirely ensure that an informal covenant will not function to block implementation, they do make it relatively likely that such dysfunctioning will be recognized in time to intervene with additional direction and assistance from administrators and program support staff.

Fifth, District 19 implementation of the CMLRP and the comprehensive reading program has allowed for consideration of school situations involving the informal structure in each school and the "cultural adaptation" required for successful implementation.

Recognizing that sophisticated and committed classroom-level implementation is required for the success of most meaningful instructional innovations, many educational administrators and policy-makers have argued for and initiated

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[14] For example, see Karl Weick, "Educational Organizations as Loosely Coupled Systems," Administrative Science Quarterly, v. 21 (1975), pp. 1-18.

"bottoms-up," "organizational development" (OD) change efforts that emphasize thorough reformulation and reorganization of goals and procedures at the school level rather than central selection of innovations. Fullan, Miles, and Taylor recently defined OD particularly in terms of its thrust as a planned change effort that emphasizes the development of "problem solving, communication, collaboration, participation, trust, and uncovering and confronting conflict"[15] in educational organizations, and summarized fifteen years of research and experience as follows:

> . . . The best general guidelines for use of OD seem to be threefold: (1) use OD in school districts that meet (or can come to meet) certain readiness criteria, and introduce OD in those settings following guidelines suggested in this review, (2) develop and adapt new models of OD, which are more appropriate to changing contemporary conditions and to divergent settings . . ., and (3) use other strategies (planned curriculum change, new hiring, new policies and legislation, political lobbying) for organizational change where (1) or (2) cannot be achieved (although components of OD, especially its underlying principles, such as reflexity, valid data, participatory problem-solving processes can be incorporated into any change strategy).[16]

In terms of the definitions provided by Fullan, *et. al*., District 19's planned change efforts would not be considered "full-scale" or "classic" OD inasmuch as district officials did not attempt to systematically and comprehensively improve school-level problem-solving and related skills focused on school-by-school resetting of fundamental goals and all concomitant organizational arrangements and practices. Such a process takes a minimum of several years to initiate and carry out,[17] and District 19 officials did not feel they had time or funding to engage in this type of effort. They did, however, use participatory problem-solving processes (e.g., problem-solving meetings for the Resident Trainers and the assistant principals) and other aspects of OD in various facets of implementation of the comprehensive reading program. In addition, they developed and/or applied a variety of other implementation "strategies" that Fullan, *et. al.*, might consider as exemplifying or fitting in with their guidelines. For example, individual school plans were worked out in close collaboration between the district office and school principals, and new policies involving monitoring of mastery-learning testing arrangements for the CMLRP were developed district-wide as well as in individual schools. In this sense, District 19 change efforts might be viewed as a combined "top down" and "bottoms up" approach because considerable attention has been given to implementation problems and considerations at the individual school and classroom levels.

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[15] Michael Fullan, Matthew B. Miles, and Gib Taylor, *Organizational Development in Schools: The State of the Art*. Washington, D.C.: The National Institute of Education, 1981, p. 5.

[16] *Ibid*., p. 58.

[17] Richard A. Schmuck, Philip J. Runkel, Jane H. Arends, and Richard I Arends. *Second Handbook of Organizational Development in Schools*. Palo Alto, California: Mayfield, 1977.

From another point of view, District 19 efforts to implement the comprehensive reading program might be considered under Fullan, et. al.'s guideline to "develop and adapt new models of OD, which are more appropriate to changing contemporary conditions and to divergent settings." Such an interpretation would place emphasis on several studies indicating that a classic OD approach may be dysfunctional in crisis-ridden urban schools or districts which exist in a particularly "turbulent" environment. Bassin and Gross, for example, concluded that renewal efforts at inner city schools should begin with "actual problem-solving rather than intensive training . . . due to the lack of tolerance and time among inner city school personnel for activities that do not generate immediate tangible results."[18] Similarly, Cohen and Gadon found that "existing power relationships" rather than classical OD should be used in big city school districts "to get the project started without permanent negative consequences" when, as often happens, "there is much mistrust among members of a client system,"[19] and Fullan, Miles, and Taylor have concluded that "schools in large urban situations may not have the time, energy or motivation to participate in process oriented OD, if it does not demonstrate some short-term practical pay-off on issues of concern to the staff."[20]

From this point of view, selection of the CMLRP as the basis of the comprehensive reading program probably served to facilitate adaptation of OD strategies bearing on the implementation of planned change. As we noted above, the CMLRP seems to be particularly promising because it allows many students and teachers to experience greater success than previously had been true; in so doing, it may provide teachers and administrators with an approach they can "latch" on to in endeavoring to cope with the problems and frustrations of improving instruction in an inner city environment.

It also should be noted that District 19 implementation efforts have been compatible with much research stressing the importance of "linking agents" in bringing about planned changes in schools.[21] Linkage and linkage agents have received considerable emphasis in District 19 through the employment of five Staff Developers and full-time Resident Trainers at each school, with special emphasis placed on guiding the work of the Resident Trainers from the district office while also working out organizational arrangements for their jobs at the individual building level.

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[18] M. Bassin and T. Gross, "Organizational Development: A Viable Method of Change for Urban Secondary Schools." Paper presented at the annual meeting of American Educational Research Association, Toronto, April 1978, pp. 3-4.

[19] A. Cohen and H. Gadon, "Changing the Management Culture in a Public School System," Journal of Applied Behavioral Science, v. 14, no. 1 (1978), p. 73.

[20] Fullan, Miles, and Taylor, op. cit., p. 27.

[21] For example, see Eddy J. Van Meter, "Planned Change in Education," Administrator's Notebook, v. 28, no. 7 (1979-80) pp. 1-4., and Ronald G. Havelock, "Resource Linkage in Innovative Educational Problem-Solving: Ideal vs. Actual," Research and Development in Education, v. 6 (Summer 1973), pp. 76-87.

III. Implementation of the CMLRP at Individual Schools

The purpose of this section is to describe organizational processes and arrangements at selected Chicago and New York City District 19 inner-city schools that appear to be successful in implementation of the CMLRP. Each sub-section will provide a description of processes and arrangements that appear to play an important part in accounting for successful implementation at the individual school level.

May School in Chicago

May Elementary School is located on the west side of Chicago and serves a predominantly inner-city population. In 1980-81 enrollment was 1,640. Approximately 60 percent of the students are poverty students, and nearly all are black. As described below, the CMLRP has been implemented school-wide at May for two academic years: 1979-80 and 1980-81. Results in terms of student achievement have been encouraging. Annual reading gains (i.e., for students moving through grades, two, three, four, etc.) on the ITBS have been above the typical inner-city average of .7 for eight of the twelve cases for which data are available. For example, students in age cycle 10 (equivalent to grade 5) in 1980-81 gained an average of .9 in reading, and students in age cycle 11 gained 1.1. Students moving through age cycles 9 and 10 in the two-year period gained 1.7, students moving through age cycles 10 and 11 gained 1.9, students moving through cycles 11 and 12 gained 2.1, and students moving through cycles 12 and 13 gained 1.8.

These scores obviously do not mean that achievement problems at May have been completely solved in two years. Students in the graduating class still scored 1.7 years below the national norm of 8.7 in 1981, and students in age cycles 7, 9, 12, and 13 gained .6 or less during the 1980-81 term. Nevertheless, average annual gains for all students at May are now close to the national norm of 1.0.

Related to this improvement, students graduating from May now are much more likely to apply for and win acceptance to selective high schools in Chicago than was true before 1980. Where before 1980 few May graduates applied for or were admitted to high schools which have meaningful entrance requirements (e.g., a reading score of 8.5 for entering ninth graders), in 1981 107 of 121 graduating students at May applied for and were admitted to such schools.

Based on several years experience at May, much has been learned concerning approaches for implementing the CMLRP effectively on a school-wide basis. Understanding of developments at May requires some knowledge of efforts that were made to improve instruction in reading and other subjects throughout the Chicago Public Schools during the 1970s. During the 1970s, elementary schools in Chicago were theoretically organized according to "continuous progress" rather than "graded" arrangements wherein most students through age eight are in primary cycle units, most ten- and eleven-year olds are in intermediate units, and most twelve- and thirteen-year-olds are in upper cycle units.[22] To implement continuous progress instruction, the district developed a K-8 continuum of more than 1,400 instructional objectives to serve as the basis for elementary reading. Curriculum guides for teachers provided behavioral assessment and testing items for the reading objectives.

Because this collection of objectives was too large and unwieldly, 273 "key" objectives subsequently were identified and printed on a mastery record card on which teachers were to record each student's progress in mastering basic skills. All students were to be grouped and taught within one of thirteen reading levels incorporating the 273 objectives, with levels A through G generally taught in the primary units (i.e., K-3) and levels H through N (there is no I) taught in intermediate and upper units (4-8).

These continuous progress arrangements did result, at least in part, in some city-wide reading gains. For example, mean reading comprehension achievement among thirteen-year-olds increased from 6.6 (G.E.) in 1975 to 7.3 in 1980. However, many or most schools experienced severe problems in implementing Chicago's mastery-based continuous progress reading program, and progress not only was very uneven but was very slight at many schools. Mean reading achievement at the end of the eighth grade was still one-and-one half years below the national average in 1980.

Development of mastery learning reading materials was initiated in the Chicago Public Schools in 1976, in order to develop instructional materials designed to allow for more successful implementation of the system's mastery learning reading approach. Directed by Michael Katims, staff in the Mastery Learning Reading Office had developed the CMLRP to a point that led to publication by the Mastery Learning Education Corporation in 1981. However, CMLRP materials for levels L through N had been largely completed by the summer of 1978, and were used that summer as the basis for summer school instruction for approximately 22,000 thirteen- and fourteen-year old students who had failed to master 80 percent of Chicago's eighth grade reading objectives. May School reading Teacher Walter Thompson helped conduct one of the summer schools, during which time he became interested in the possibility of using the CMLRP as a basis for improving reading instruction during the regular school year. Thompson had concluded that basal readers currently available were deficient in selection, organization, and sequencing of skills for inner city students, and consequently students were being prepared to be "word-callers" rather than taught the comprehension skills they would need later.[23] He and Principal Albert J. Pranno had both been appointed to May in February of 1978. They decided to initiate instruction with the CMLRP during 1978-79.

Implementation thus began in the Fall of 1978 by two teachers who were encouraged to use CMLRP materials. One teacher used the basal reader two days a week and the CMLRP three days a week; the other reversed this distribution. Working with Pranno, Thompson, and other resource persons, the two teachers made a special effort to coordinate reading instruction offered through the basal reader with CMLRP instruction. They also endeavored to develop enrichment activities appropriate and feasible for students completing the first formative tests. Thompson's description of first year developments and subsequent implementation the second year is as follows:

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[22] Partly because this organization was largely on paper in many schools and because it frequently did not appear to be successful, these "continuous progress" arrangements were eliminated as a district-wide requirement during the summer of 1981.

[23] Walter E. Thompson, "Chicago Mastery Learning Reading with Learning Strategies: Cognitive and Affective Outcomes - A Practitioner's Perspective." Paper presented at the Conference on Thinking and Learning Skills, University of Pittsburgh, October 1980, p. 19.

> Close observation of these two classrooms revealed that, as students began to have successful learning experiences and this success was perceived and believed by both the teachers and the students, a remarkable change occurred; namely, students' thwarted hunger for success evidenced itself by their 'pushing' the teacher for more material, thereby mastering units far faster than expected; classroom disruptions decreased; and teachers began to indicate acceptance of the basic premise of mastery learning. . . .
>
> Perhaps of equal importance was the fact that the teachers using the materials began to discuss their successful experiences with their colleagues. Other teachers began to inquire as to when they were going to get to use the materials. With this interest stimulated, the use of CMLR/LS was expanded to include additional classrooms. . . .
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> During the second year of implementation, as the positive effects of the use of the materials became most evident, the decision to implement school-wide was made principally because of teacher demand for it. It must be pointed out that in classrooms which used the materials up to this point, very little inservice or follow-up assistance was provided. Moreover, school-wide implementation necessitated a thorough school-wide inservice which included: rationale, mastery learning teaching model, day-to-day scheduling, important do's and don'ts, and important teacher concerns. This inservice was the only formal staff development provided.[24]

As Thompson stresses in the preceding paragraph, there has been very little emphasis at May on providing formal in-service training for teachers. Instead, continuing training has been provided through a variety of relatively informal approaches that combine monitoring of instruction with staff development. The most important among these approaches have been the following:

1. Staff development and monitoring provided by resource teachers and the principal. Three resource teachers devote the largest part of their time to working with teachers on implementation of the CMLRP and other aspects of instructional improvement. These three persons are Barbara Hill, Staff Development Specialist for the primary age unit; Frada Boxer, Staff Development

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[24] Ibid., p. 19.

Specialist for the intermediate age unit; and IRIP teacher[25] Walter Thompson, who has special responsibility for the upper age cycles 12 and 13. Thompson has described the initial emphasis in this approach to monitoring and staff development as follows:

> . . . Initially, resource teacher and classroom teachers had frequent evaluative and planning conferences. The springboard for these conferences was a wall chart which is present in every classroom. (On this chart the column headings are the array of skills a student must master for each reading level. The students' names are the row headings. As students master skills, the cells under the skills are blackened-in beside each student's name. As entries are made on this chart, anyone examining it is able to assess individual student progress as well as the progress of the class as a whole.) In the conferences, this profile chart is used as the basis of inquiries as to why certain students are not progressing at the pace of the group, is there an indicated need for special help, and what are realistic goals for individuals and the group? Once goals are set in these conferences and teachers' techniques and decision-making skills are refined, these conferences became less frequent.
>
> Classroom visitations were another integral part of the monitoring process. These visits served two primary purposes; namely, to gather information for the teacher conferences and to observe the affective reactions of students as they became involved in using the materials. Also, weekly conferences involving the principal, resource teacher, and classroom teacher were scheduled during which the affective and cognitive changes in students were assessed.

2. Focusing of supervisory efforts initiated by the principal. As mentioned above, Principal Albert Pranno frequently observes and meets with classroom teachers throughout the school. In addition, he confers at least several times a week with the resource teachers and other supervisory personnel (e.g., the two assistant principals), either singly or in groups. Based on such meetings and on monitoring information obtained from other sources (see below), twelve out of 32 teachers (37%) at May were identified at the end of the first year of school-wide implementation as needing "intensive care" to help them teach the CMLRP and other instructional components more effectively. Resource teachers and administrators worked particularly closely with these teachers during the 1980-81 school year. By June of 1981, only five of the twelve were still considered to be in need of this type of attention and assistance.

3. Frequent meetings for teachers within and across age cycles. As at many Chicago schools, meetings for the entire faculty are scheduled once a week.

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[25] The Intensive Reading Improvement Program (IRIP) is a district-funded program that provides schools with a teacher who serves as a resource person, inservice training leader, diagnostician, and coordinator of the school's instructional programs.

Probably more important, May teachers within an age cycle unit meet for instructional planning in various-size groups several times a week. This has been made possible partly by scheduling the same preparation period for teachers in a given unit. Topics given most attention in these meetings include: selection of teaching objectives and materials for short-range and long-range emphasis; selection and sharing of enrichment activities and materials for implementing the CMLRP; and diagnosis of and prescription for solution of students' individual problems.

Other aspects of instructional and organizational arrangements and processes which appear to have been particularly important in implementing the CMLRP at May involve the following: organization of the school; minimal record-keeping for teachers; comparative monitoring of classroom progress; structuring of activities for CMLRP enrichment; supportive emphasis in supervision; and greater stress on student homework and on parent involvement regarding homework.

Organization of the school. Students at May are grouped into classes within one of three age-cycle units, on the basis of age and criterion-referenced-tests common to the Chicago key objectives reading continuum and the CMLRP. Grouping on the basis of the CMLRP has allowed for more effective alignment of instructional materials with specific skills to be taught to a given group of students, and for a more manageable task for teachers whose reading groups now have a smaller spread of achievement levels than was true using Holt data for placement. This also has been made possible by teaching reading, usually one hour per day, at the same time each morning throughout the classes in an age-cycle unit (e.g., primary unit), which in turn allows for "walk-in" reading arrangements wherein a student can be assigned for a longer or shorter period of time to a teacher whose students are working at a similar performance level. Within the morning reading period, some teachers divide weekly instruction into two or three CMLRP sessions and two or three sessions based on the basal reader or other materials; others divide weekly instruction into ten sessions as is done in schools in New York District 19.[26] Reading labs also are explicitly scheduled and organized so as to serve ten classes of the lowest achieving students and to coordinate instruction between laboratory staff and the regular classroom teachers.

Minimal record-keeping for teachers. By design, teachers' record-keeping on students' skill development consists mainly of just two components: (1) the large wall-charts which record each student's progress in the CMLRP; and (2) individual student profile sheets which record the same information as the wall chart. This approach to record-keeping was initiated explicitly in order to avoid overburdening teachers, as appeared to be happening at many Chicago schools which were using computers and other technological "advances" to record student performance in order to "facilitate" improvements in instruction.

Comparative monitoring of classroom progress. By "comparative monitoring," we mean the collection and organization of data to indicate how much progress is being made in classrooms taught by teachers with students of similar previous performance levels. As described earlier in this report, administrators and supervisors in New York District 19 use CMLRP progress charts at the school level and the district level to identify situations in which pacing may be too slow or too fast and modifications which may be needed in the selection and administration of the materials. Data on classroom progress are used in a similar manner at the May School. In addition, standardized test score data (from the ITBS) also are used to review classroom progress at May.

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[26] Individual teachers sometimes institute 4-1, 7-3, 8-2, or other patterns they believe will be most productive for their students.

It should be noted that comparative monitoring of classroom progress also assists in improving instruction in several other ways. Administrators at May report that sharing of such information tends to stimulate teachers to demand more of each other, and it also provides reinforcement for teachers who implement the CMLRP effectively, by highlighting their accomplishments during the academic year.

Structuring of activities for CMLRP enrichment. As explained in the first section of this report, enrichment activities for students who pass a first formative test are an important part of the instructional design in mastery learning. Design and administration of productive enrichment activities is a difficult task because this requires a good deal of personalized individual and small-group work which in turn depends on the availability of appropriate instructional materials and classroom management techniques. Staff at May have been emphasizing two systematic approaches for productive structuring of enrichment: (1) Classroom libraries have been built up[27] to provide SQUIRT (Sustained, Quiet, Uninterrupted, Instructional, Reading Time); and (2) Peer tutoring has been used to provide enrichment for faster students.

Supportive emphasis in supervision. As part of their strategy for implementing the CMLRP, Principal Albert Pranno and other supervisors at May explicitly attempt to understand teachers' needs and problems, and to provide encouragement and support at every opportunity. Examples of this emphasis in administration include the following: (1) Pranno insists that certified teachers are professional persons who can teach effectively in an inner city school if given appropriate support. He admits that many teachers need help but says, "We are willing to give the help. I cannot accept the premise that teachers will not improve instruction when given the right assistance. With the structured materials now available through the CMLRP, even a mediocre teacher can do a good job."[28] In return, Pranno insists that teachers discharge their responsibilities in accordance with school-level priorities. In addition, the emphasis in meetings conducted by supervisory personnel is on "sharing successes" rather than "exposing failures;" (2) Teachers' requests for materials and other instructional needs are met as soon as possible in accordance with Pranno's perception that this is necessary to maintain the administrator's credibility. "We're going to give you what you want, within-reason," he tells teachers, and "thereafter we expect you to use them;"[29] (3) The resource teachers (i.e., trainers) try to be flexible in working with the faculty. Although one resource person is assigned to each of the three age cycle units, the three persons in this role sometimes have "traded" teachers when it was felt that this was desirable for one or another reason; (4) Teachers whose students are making satisfactory progress receive a personal thank-you letter from the principal; (5) Students who are being seriously disruptive are immediately removed without question from the classroom of a victimized teacher; (6) Through emphasis on age-cycle staff meetings, many school management issues are now handled more effectively and informally through peer encouragement among teachers than through detailed administrative oversight. For example, in many cases teachers ask other teachers to "have your kids quiet down" or "get your kids in your room," because a quiet, orderly school environment is considered important to the success of the unit as a whole and the entire school.

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[27] As students have learned to read more proficiently using the CMLRP, books which previously were unusable have now become usable.

[28] Personal interview, May 26, 1981.

[29] Ibid.

Greater stress on student homework and on parent involvement regarding homework. Following guidelines from the Chicago Public Schools and from the school's administration, staff at May have made a systematic and concerted effort to initiate specific homework requirements and to link homework to the regular program of curriculum and instruction. Staff at May have put together packets of worksheets and learning activities appropriate for teaching CMLRP skills and sent them home to parents. One result, according to the principal, has been "tremendous parental cooperation, disproving the myth that inner city parents don't care."[30] Implementation of school-wide arrangements for homework has been supervised by the resource teachers.

It should be noted that teachers and parents report that the productivity of homework assignments has been enhanced by introduction of Chicago's reading objectives continuum and the CMLRP. Now that students have reading materials and exercises specifically geared to the reading curriculum, it is easier for teachers to specify relevant homework assignments and for parents to assist in and/or monitor their completion. Introduction of CMLRP materials also has helped parents understand the curriculum more fully, which in turn enables them to work more effectively with the teacher in emphasizing development of key reading skills.

It also should be noted that the principal and other supervisory staff have insisted that all student assignments be designed to produce meaningful learning to the fullest extent possible. In this regard, one of his first actions after being appointed to May was to "immediately outlaw" unproductive activities such as those engaged in by students whose teachers required them--whether as punishment or as a regular assignment--to copy a sentence five hundred times or reproduce a set of pages from a textbook. Instead, teachers are required to assign constructive writing or some other productive activity. Parents were informed about this requirement, and Pranno says that he and other supervisors "are in the classrooms all the time and can see whether it is being violated. . . . We have now eradicated it" [straight copying and similar make-work.][31]

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[30] Ibid.

[31] Ibid.

P.S. 174 in New York District 19

One of District 19's smallest schools with only 550 students in grades K-6, P.S. 174 has been implementing the CMLRP in accordance with arrangements we described earlier in this paper. One hundred-and-ten of the students are in eight special education classes. Students are drawn from a surrounding poverty area, 75 percent are black, and approximately 95 percent are poverty students.

Oliver Gibson is the principal, Jerry Rumsky is the assistant principal, and Katherine Warren is the resident trainer.

Initial results of the CMLRP and the comprehensive reading program have been encouraging. Excluding Limited English Proficiency students, the percentage of students scoring at or above grade level increased from seventeen percent in 1979 to 29 percent in 1980 and 1981. Changes by grade in the percent of students scoring two or more years below grade level were as follows:

Grade	1979	1980	1981
2	3	0	0
3	17	0	2
4	8	24	4
5	32	16	10
6	36	28	28

As shown in these data, only ten percent of fifth graders, who had received more than one year of instruction in the CMLRP by the Spring of 1981, were two or more years below grade level in the 1981 testing.

Probably the most important organizational change which has occured at P.S. 174 in conjunction with the CMLRP is that instructional assistance and supervisory conferences are much more concrete than they had been before. According to Assistant Principal Rumsky, he and the Resident Trainer now tend to ask teachers specifically what problems are occurring as they teach a particular skill or unit and to offer more specific and practical guidance when monitoring data indicate that the teacher may be proceeding too fast or too slow or encountering other implementation problems. No longer is the supervisor or resource teacher confined as much to initiating or conducting teacher conferences with a general statement such as "What can I do for you today?"[32] The process of providing assistance and/or supervision, as a result, is more comfortable and productive for all parties involved.

Rumsky also believes that specific arrangements for providing instructional assistance and supervision in connection with the CMLRP must be worked out in each school. Their success depends on the personalities and working patterns characteristic of the persons in the school. In the case of P.S. 174, Rumsky asked the Resident Trainer to help him conduct formal conferences with and observations of teachers several times during the 1980-81 school year. He feels that this approach gave the Resident Trainer legitimacy in approaching teachers more informally at other times, but also believes that it might not have worked as well had the trainer not formerly been a highly-respected teacher at the school. Mrs. Warren's reputation and personality greatly reduced the likelihood that teachers would perceive her interest in their instruction and her requests for information as "spying" on their efforts to implement the new reading program. Conversely, in accepting the position of Resident Trainer, Warren had to be willing to accept the likelihood that some of her peers occasionally would react with hostility, particularly inasmuch as the faculty already was working hard to switch from Open Court to Houghton Mifflin readers at the time they were required to implement the CMLRP. Rumsky and Warren both took great pains at the beginning of the year to clarify her role as an instructional resource person, not an evaluator.

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[32] Personal interview, May 15, 1981.

One strategy followed by the administration in monitoring progress and compliance and providing assistance with respect to the CMLRP was to focus initial efforts on the teachers who had relatively little experience or had been having unusually severe problems in the classroom. When these relatively "needy" teachers became visibly more successful as a result of implementing the CMLRP, other teachers became more favorable and some of the most outstanding even began to worry about being surpassed. Before long, implementation was more systematic and serious throughout the school.[33] This strategy appears somewhat contradictory to that in the May school where some teachers were identified for "intensive assistance" at the end of the first year of school-wide implementation, but it is not precisely opposite because May's list of "neediest" teachers specifically included only those having the greatest problems implementing the CMLRP.

Other aspects of implementation which appear to have been most important at P.S. 174 include the following:

1. During the first few months of implementation, the Resident Trainer held frequent grade-level meetings with teachers to discuss pacing and other issues involving implementation of the materials. These meetings sometimes have resulted in decisions to make small changes in the sequence with which skills are taught, in order to integrate the CMLRP most effectively with other aspects of curriculum and instruction in the school as a whole. Teachers also have been deciding, both individually and in groups, to supplement and/or reinforce CMLRP comprehension instruction with lessons from the basal reader or other sources.

2. Frequent grade-level meetings, faculty meetings, and staff development conferences which have been held in connection with the CMLRP and the comprehensive reading program have been made possible by careful scheduling which has included assignment of classes and/or students to other clasrooms to free teachers to participate in staff development, and voluntary utilization

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[33] Assistant Principal Rumsky believes that this outcome would not have been possible had not the CMLRP allowed weaker teachers to become much more effective. He contrasts the CMLRP with the school's previous reading materials, which he feels worked well only in classrooms of the strongest teachers.

of teacher preparation periods to conduct small-group or individual conferences.

3. Sympathetic consideration has been given to teachers' problems in implementing the program. Expeditious pacing is a key to success--and a potential virtue--of the CMLRP, but it is difficult for teachers to maintain a faster pace than they have in the past, particularly since meticulous records must be kept on student performance. Administrators at P.S. 174 made an intensive push to establish appropriate pacing at the beginning of the school year and then "eased off" some during the year to avoid placing too much strain on teachers they perceived were doing their best to cooperate.[34]

4. A special effort is made to make working conditions as positive as possible for teachers, and administrators go out of their way to make sure that teachers are treated equitably. For example, administrators make sure they "repay" teachers for preparation periods they voluntarily devote to staff development or other institutionally-important activities, the administration frequently arranges to have coffee, pretzels, donuts, or other snacks available for teachers, duty periods are scheduled to provide maximum convenience for teachers, and emphasis is placed on maintaining an orderly school environment.

Although generally pleased with initial implementation of the CMLRP and the comprehensive reading program, administrators at P.S. 174 feel that much remains to be done in the future. In particular, they report that "We are working hard to make sure that science and social studies do not disappear from the curriculum due to the heavy emphasis on reading and math,"[35] and they are concerned that teachers may be less enthusiastic about implementing the CMLRP as "newness" wears off.

In this regard they are especially concerned because teachers not in the parallel instruction approach (in which the reading teacher takes fifteen students each from five low achieving classes) are finding it necessary to do a great deal of preparation at home and because record-keeping is burdensome for teachers with large classes. They feel that these problems would be greatly alleviated by employing a second reading teacher for additional parallel instruction but do not have sufficient resources to make this possible.

P.S. 224 in New York District 19

P.S. 224 is another District 19 elementary school in which implementation of the CMLRP and the comprehensive reading program appears to be proceeding successfully. Principal Richard Braithwaite attributes most of this success to district-wide arrangements and processes which we described in an earlier section of this paper. Approximately 75 percent of the students at P.S. 224 are black, and about 80 percent are poverty students. Between Spring, 1979 and Spring, 1981, the percentage of students achieving two or more years below grade level changed as follows:

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[34] *Ibid.*

[35] *Ibid.*

Grade	1979	1980	1981
2	1	2	0
3	21	6	6
4	21	19	7
5	27	16	15

Many of the emphases described above with respect to May School and P.S. 174 also are characteristic of implementation at P.S. 224. For example, CMLRP classroom progress charts are carefully monitored by the principal (as at May and P.S. 174), teachers meet frequently to share ideas on implementation, and special emphasis was placed as at P.S. 174 on providing assistance to teachers experiencing difficulty at the beginning of the academic year. Other aspects of implementation which have received special emphasis at P.S. 224 include the following:

1. Administrators stress that there is to be no interruption of instruction during time set aside for mastery learning reading. The administation monitors instructional delivery to make sure that no interruptions take place.

2. Teachers are encouraged and assisted to adjust the CMLRP materials and lessons for use in their particular situations. However, in providing this assistance supervisors also try to make sure that teachers do not violate the intent or basic principles of the program.

3. All aspects of testing arrangements and schedules are carefully worked out to reduce confusion and inefficiency in instruction. In particular, whether testing involves CMLRP formative or summative tests, standardized tests, diagnostic inventories, or other test administration, scheduling is arranged to keep students appropriately grouped for instruction as long as possible.

4. The Resident Trainer and other resource and supervisory personnel encourage and assist teachers to use the mastery learning reading approach in other subjects in the curriculum. Resident Trainer Harriet Rosen believes that this may turn out to be the most valuable aspect of the CMLRP.[36] Using the CMLRP motivates teachers to seek assistance aimed at general application of mastery learning and comprehensive improvement of instruction.

5. Teachers are encouraged to stress group involvement in learning among students. Because students are acquiring more information and mastering more skills than they did previously, they have more material to share and become more intensely involved in classroom learning groups.

Finally, Braithwaite reiterated his belief that the district-level initiative in introducing the CMLRP and the comprehensive reading program had a positive effect at the individual building level. Many of the teachers, he reported, were stimulated in a positive direction by the feeling that they were participating in a systematic effort for improving achievement at inner city schools throughout the district.[37]

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[36] _Ibid._

[37] _Ibid._

P.S. 214 in New York District 19

Located in a neighborhood which is experiencing substantial population decline due to severe urban decay, P.S. 214 had 872 students in grades K-7 in 1981. After enrollment declined from a 1970's high of 1,400, the seventh grade was added in 1980-81 to provide for better building utilization. Approximately 65 percent of the students are poverty students, and the racial-ethnic composition is about 45 percent black, 45 percent Hispanic, and 10 percent "other."

Reading achievement at P.S. 214 has improved consistently in every grade since introduction of the CMLRP and the comprehensive reading program. The percentage of students two or more years below grade level has changed as follows:

Grade	1979	1980	1981
2	0	0	0
3	14	0	3
4	7	7	5
5	28	4	14
6	29	22	18
7	--	--	26

Conversely, the percentage of students scoring at or above grade level has increased from 29 percent in 1979 to 38 percent in 1980 to 46 percent in 1981. Grade-level tests exemplifying this pattern are as follows:

Grade	1979	1980	1981
2	36	41	53
3	29	37	43
4	29	35	40
5	28	53	46
6	26	27	51
7	--	--	49

Overall organizational arrangements for implementation at P.S. 214 of course resemble those at other District 19 elementary schools. Some of the local adaptations and emphases worked out by Principal Michael Galeno, Resident Trainer Gloria Sherman, and other staff at P.S. 214 are described below.

1. Day-to-day supervision of implementation arrangements for the CMLRP and other aspects of the instructional program is shared by the principal and two assistant principals. One assistant principal takes special responsibility for reading and language arts; the other works with teachers particularly on science, math, and other subjects.

2. The principal has made it clear that the Resident Trainer is responsible for implementing the CMLRP on a high priority basis. Teachers understand that the Resident Trainer's requests for information dealing with the pace and scope of classroom implementation relfect the principal's insistence that implementation problems be identified and solved.

3. The Resident Trainer sets aside 45 minutes each morning for conferences with teachers, and the administration finds ways to release time during this period for teachers who ask or are requested to participate in these conferences.

4. Scheduling has been worked out so that teachers have more than the union-required number of preparation periods, and teachers at given grade levels (i.e., first and second grades, third and fourth grades, and fifth and sixth grades) have been scheduled for common preparation periods to facilitate grade-level conferences. In part, this scheduling arrangement has been accomplished by coordinating the schedules of regular classroom teachers with those of teachers in Title I and other special programs.

5. Grouping of students for reading instruction has been determined partly in terms of CMLRP levels in some grades since the beginning of the 1980-81 term and will be more consistently arranged on this basis in 1981-82. Combined with the growing availability of CMLRP materials throghout the school, this is making it increasingly feasible to place students at an optimal starting level.

6. In accordance with the UFT contract, teachers of the lowest achieving class at a given grade level are given the opportunity to rotate to a higher achieving class the following year. Also within the contract, teachers are permitted to maintain assignment to the lowest achieving class, and in any case need not be rotated to the highest achieving class. The principal and other administrative personnel work closely with teachers to ensure that placement is both appropriate for the individual teacher and productive for the school.

7. In accordance with current district-level requirements, paraprofessionals spend most of their time with students in grades K-2, but arrangements also have been worked out within the regulations to provide additional support as needed for some students in higher grades.

8. Parallel instruction arrangements have been adjusted so that the reading teacher can provide instruction for some low achieving fourth and fifth graders.

9. The Resident Trainer and the reading teacher work together very closely to coordinate CMLRP instruction in the parallel instruction classes with that in regular classrooms. They report that this approach has made reading instruction more effective for more low achieving students than was possible through previous Title I arrangements and other special programs.

In general, administrators and resource personnel at P.S. 214 have been trying to reorganize instructional assignments and schedules so that an appropriate learning envirnment is provided for every child. They believe that district organizational arrangements for the CMLRP and the comprehensive reading program have facilitated this goal, but they see additional needs to which they hope to respond in the future. For example, they believe a full-time guidance counselor would be very helpful in assisting or arranging for assistance for students whose academic performance and/or classroom behavior would greatly benefit from skilled professional guidance and counseling.

IV. Implementation of School-Wide Approaches at Selected Schools in Los Angeles and Chicago

This section describes five inner city elementary schools that are using school-wide approaches to improving instruction for students in concentrated poverty neighborhoods. By "school-wide approaches" we mean a coordinated school-wide effort that has eliminated or greatly reduced ESEA Title I pull-out arrangements which fragment education for low-achieving students temporarily separated from their classmates. Three of the schools are Los Angeles schools participating in that district's Schoolwide Project, and two are Chicago schools which have overcome or avoided these problems.

To provide a context for understanding developments at the three Los Angeles schools, it is necessary to briefly describe the Schoolwide Project and several other aspects of instructional planning for inner city schools in the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD). These aspects of planning involve efforts to implement an essential skills curriculum, and initiation of the Curriculum Alignment Project between 1979 and 1981.

The Schoolwide Project in Los Angeles

Beginning in 1978, the LAUSD initiated a court-ordered desegregation plan which dealt not just with racially-balanced schools but also required that efforts be made to improve achievement in schools which remained Racially Isolated Minority Schools (RIMS). Most RIMS are inner city schools whose students could not be included in the student reassignment plan.

For the 1979-80 school year, approximately $40,000,000 was spent to improve education in RIM schools. Approximately $5,000,000 of this amount was expended as part of the Schoolwide Project at 74 schools participating in Title I. For the 1980-81 school year, 73 Title I schools were added to the Schoolwide Project. The Schoolwide approach, authorized in Section 133 of PL 95-561, allows a school to use Title I funds for all students rather than limiting expenditures to low-achieving students. Until PL 95-561 was passed in 1978, Title I was mostly limited in practice to "pullout" instruction in which eligible students are removed from regular classrooms for special instruction in reading, math, and other subjects. Pullout programs create obstacles in working to improve the achievement of disadvantaged students. For example: (1) students removed for special instruction are labelled as "dummies" by other students; (2) scheduling complications and confusion detract from instruction in the regular classroom; (3) instructional methods and materials differ between Title I and regular classroom instruction, thus sometimes confusing students or even damaging achievement; (4) regular classroom teachers are encouraged to feel they are not responsible for the performance of low-achieving students--this very difficult task can be perceived as the responsibility of Title I teachers; (5) students whose achievement improves significantly are returned to the regular classroom where their achievement may not continue to improve; (6) materials and equipment purchased for Title I students either sit in cabinets unused or teachers are forced to violate regulations to use excellent materials with all their students; (7) "disincentives" are created wherein Title I personnel may lose their positions if too many students improve too much in achievement.; (8) confusion is created concerning the principal's authority as compared with central Title I office authority to supervise instruction. Principals are tempted either to relinquish responsibility or to use Title I personnel for inappropriate tasks, or both; and

(9) inordinate amounts of staff time are spent keeping records related to the eligibility of students.

Given these difficulties in the modal Title I approach, it is not surprising that achievement of students has not risen to a level commensurate with the billions of dollars spent nationally each year.[38] To avoid these difficulties, school districts now can use Title I funds for all students in a school, provided that participating schools serve a population not less than 75 percent from low income families and that the district adds funds for non-Title I students at the same per pupil level as Title I provides for eligible students. In doing so, however, each Schoolwide school must prepare a plan describing how Title I plus additional and regular district funds will be used to attain goals specified as part of the plan. Schools with an approved plan are in a better position to implement a comprehensive instructional improvement approach because they need not: (1) account for Title I funds separately from funds available for regular programs; (2) identify particular children as being eligible to participate in programs assisted under Title I; or (3) demonstrate that services provided under Title I supplement rather than supplant regularly provided services.

It should be noted that the LAUSD probably will eliminate the Schoolwide Project during the 1981-82 school year, partly because it is very expensive and partly because there are questions concerning how well it has worked and how important a force for change it has been at most participating schools. For various reasons having to do with financial limitations, desegregation crises, and the press of other business, LAUSD officials were not able to provide sufficient planning assistance and monitoring to help most schools make full use of the flexibility the Schoolwide approach allows for thorough-going institutional reorganization. In addition, schools with a very high percentage of Title I students receive relatively little additional money under Schoolwide and thus may not be inclined to change their fundamental organizational and instructional arrangements and/or may already be offering a comprehensive approach with relatively little pullout. As did the authors of a recent national evaluation of the Schoolwide Section of Title I,[39] LAUSD administrators believe that it has not resulted in fundamental change in many schools.

Nevertheless, the Schoolwide Project has made a significant difference or, at least, facilitated substantially improved instruction in some schools. The three Los Angeles schools we describe in this section seem to have utilized Schoolwide advantageously in reorganizing and improving instruction. We also want to emphasize, however, that Title I and other special funding can be utilized effectively and the problems inherent in pullout can be overcome or minimized at inner city schools even in the absence of participation in a

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[38] Descriptions of research concerning the inherent unsoundness of most pullout approaches can be found in G. V. Glass and M. L. Smith, "Pullout" in Compensatory Education, Boulder, Colo.: University of Colorado, 1977 and W. W. Cooley, "Effectiveness of Compensatory Education," Educational Leadership (January 1981), pp.298-301.

[39] D. P Rubin and J. T. David. The Schoolwide Projects Provisions of ESEA Title I: An Analysis of the First Year of Implementation. Palo Alto, Ca.: Bay Area Research Group, 1981.

Schoolwide Project. Support for this generalization can be found in our description of two Chicago elementary schools which have worked out effective school-wide approaches within Chicago guidelines for the implementation of Title I.

LAUSD Essential Skills and A Balanced Curriculum

Los Angeles schools described in this chapter function within the LAUSD overall approach to improvement of instruction. Curriciulum developers in the LAUSD have been working for years to identify basic instructional objectives for each grade in each academic subject, and to develop testing items that teachers and the district can use to assess student mastery of the most essential skills in these grade-level curricula. The district curriculum was published as a thick guide and resource book in 1979, and was titled "A Balanced Curriculum" in order to emphasize the point that students must be taught a variety of skills and subjects, not just simple mechanical skills in reading, language, and mathematics.

District-wide testing of mastery of essential skills at the elementary level also began in 1979, when the Survey of Essential Skills (SES) was administered for the first time at all 435 elementary schools. Annual Spring administration of the SES provides schools with data on the average percentage of skill mastery among their students at a given grade level or in a given classroom, with scores available both for broad skill areas (e.g., mathematics) and the sub-skills (e.g., problem solving) that comprise them. School faculties are requested to select the five sub-skills (across subject areas) that most need improvement among students at each grade level, and to formulate and implement a plan for improving achievement in these skills. Focusing of initial planning on only five skills at each grade was due to the belief that a larger requirement might prove too global and impractical, whereas teachers would find it manageable, valuable, and reinforcing to work out plans for improving a limited number of specific skills.

Curriculum Alignment Project in Los Angeles

The three-year Curriculum Alignment Project, which began in 1979-80, was initiated byLAUSD central office and regional sub-district (Area Administrative Office) officials in cooperation with the Southwest Regional Laboratory for Educational Research and Development (SWRL). Under the direction of LAUSD officials and George Behr, Kay Ice, Roger Scott, and others on the SWRL staff, the Curriculum Alignment Project was introduced at two elementary schools in 1979-80, expanded to ten additional schools in 1980-81, and is expected to include 71 more elementary schools in 1981-82.

The goal of the Curriculum Alignment Project is not just to align teaching objectives, instruction, and testing, but also to devise in-service sessions and arrangements that help teachers align curriculum at the building level. From this point of view, the "product" of the project is a concrete in-service approach, or "technology," that can be easily adapted for use at any school. Of course, outstanding elementary educators have always striven to align objectives, instruction, and testing, but availability of a concrete mechanism for doing this makes the task much easier at the average school, particularly at inner city schools where the problems classroom teachers face in trying to effectively align curriculum have been all but overwhelming. Effective curriculum alignment has occurred at a few successful inner city schools such as the two Chicago schools we describe later in this chapter, but attainment of this goal has been dependent on outstanding administrative leadership and took years to accomplish. LAUSD and SWRL officials were unwilling to wait years or decades for all district elementary schools to (hopefully) evolve an aligned curriculum.

In its current stage of development, the Curriculum Alignment Project provides step-by-step instructions for conducting six in-service training sessions that help teachers learn to align curriculum. It also provides a school faculty with assistance in scheduling, arranging, and conducting related staff development activities, particularly grade-level meetings in which teachers work out plans and solve problems that arise in implementing an aligned curriculum.

Probably the most important product of these initial staff development activities is the preparation of correlation charts which show the skills to be taught and the materials to be used to teach and test these skills at each grade level. As part of this process teachers scrutinize their texts and other available or potentially available materials to identify specific pages that are useful in teaching a given skill to their particular students, without depending on publishers' blurbs about the utility of their materials. One natural result is that teachers are more likely to select appropriate materials from a variety of sources rather than starting at page one of a textbook and continuing through to the end regardless of how many students are misplaced (i.e., find the material too easy or too difficult) on a given page. Equally important, correlation charts also show the essential skills that currently available textbooks do not teach well; these skills frequently involve critical skills such as comprehension in reading and problem solving in math. It also appears that having teachers go through the curriculum alignment process step-by-step at each grade level helps develop a sense of ownership in the aligned curriculum they have decided as a group to teach in their classrooms.

107th Street School in Los Angeles

The 107th Street School just outside the Watts area of Los Angeles is a K-6 school which has been participating in the Schoolwide Project and other special programs to improve student achievement. Enrollment has been predominantly black, but immigrant Hispanic families have been moving into the neighborhood during the past few years, and Hispanic students now constitute about 25 percent of enrollment. The 107th Street School ranks 25th highest in percentage of poverty students among elementary schools in the LAUSD.

Funds for the Schoolwide Project at 107th Street have totaled about $60,000 annually during the past two years. The school had a pullout-type program for some students before the Schoolwide Project was initiated. Principal Mike Klentschy feels that elimination of pullout arrangements has made it easier to organize and implement a more effective instructional program. Having participated in the Curriculum Alignment Project, Klentschy and his staff have had two years of experience in working to devise and implement a comprehensive approach for improving achievement. The following changes in the average percentage of skills mastered by 107th Street students on the LAUSD Survey of Essential Skills have been registered between 1979 and 1981:

	Reading			Math			Language		
Grade	1979	1980	1981	1979	1980	1981	1979	1980	1981
1	75	89	83	86	95	94	69	88	86
2	69	64	83	78	83	89	68	82	89
3	66	53	59	71	58	65	70	68	73
4	54	62	66	56	61	67	57	67	72
5	50	69	75	49	62	64	49	62	71
6	59	65	75	43	57	61	42	61	67

As indicated in these data, great gains have been registered in the percentage of essential skills mastered by students, particularly in the intermediate grades where inner city students generally decline in performance as skills to be mastered become more difficult and abstract.[40] For example, the average percentage of reading skills mastered by sixth-grade students increased from 59 percent in 1979 to 75 percent in 1981, and the corresponding increase in math skills was from 43 percent to 61 percent. (We do not know why third grade reading and math scores declined so severely in 1980.)

Data on mastery of more specific skills at 107th Street also indicate that efforts to improve academic achievement have been highly successful, particularly with reference to SES skills the faculty selected as being particularly in need of improvement after 1979 testing. For example, the faculty selected math problem-solving as one of the five high priority skills on which to concentrate in 1979-80. Resulting gains in problem-solving were as follows:

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[40] As of Spring 1980, criterion-testing gains at 107th Street School had not translated into impressive standardized scores on the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills. The median reading score for third graders--who were lower on criterion-referenced reading in 1980 than in 1979--was at the 16th percentile, and the median score for fifth graders was at the 20th percentile. Standardized scores for 1981 were not available for this report.

Grade	1979	1980	1981
2	72	83	89
3	60	49	51
4	39	53	58
5	40	45	54
6	35	51	56

Implementation of an aligned curriculum does not take place automatically but must be carefully planned and executed if it is to have a positive impact on student achievement. Interrelated instructional processes and arrangements that have been particularly important in school-wide implementation of an aligned curriculum at 107th Street School are described below.

1. Planning and monitoring of instruction. Teachers prepare an annual plan for skills to be taught at each grade level and then translate this broad plan into monthly and weekly specification of skills to be taught in each classroom. Weekly, monthly, and semi-annual testing in reading, language, and math provides data on the extent to which each teacher's plan is being adhered to and is succeeding or failing. Administrators meet frequently with teachers to discuss week-by-week results.

2. Staff development. Arrangements for staff development are specifically designed and implemented to support the instructional planning process outlined above. A variety of activities are arranged as needed, but formal arrangements as follows also are explicitly established: Tuesday is a shortened day for students in order to allow for weekly teacher meetings. (Required student time lost is made up by extending the school day three times a month.) One Tuesday meeting each month is devoted to grade-level meetings for curriculum alignment and planning of instruction for specific skills. Two Tuesday meetings a month are set aside for a curriculum workshop led by teachers for teachers. Teachers generally determine the topics they will study or present for other teachers, but outsiders occasionally are brought in to provide assistance on specific topics. The fourth Tuesday meeting is set aside for Title I workshops involving various school-wide committees dealing with curriculum and other topics. The school-community council meets that evening so that understandings and decisions developed in the workshops can be shared throughout the school and the community. (The principal also sends parents a weekly bulletin discussing educational issues, not just a calendar-of-events.)

3. Computer support for instruction. During the 1979-81 school year, Principal Michael Klentschy chaired a committee of elementary principals who were trying to identify ways to introduce computer services at inner city schools. Twenty schools already had computer terminals for which the central office was developing software to expedite record-keeping on attendance and student background, and the committee explored possibilities for using the computer to improve management of instruction. When it proved impossible for the central office to provide additional software, Kentschy spent Title I money to purchase a microcomputer and the part-time services of a programmer. Having gone through the process of curriculum alignment, Klentschy and his faculty felt the computer could be a valuable tool in helping select textbook sections and

other resources to teach specific skills. As a result, the administration now has modified and extended Houghton Miffin's management information system to provide regular reports to faculty on: (a) students below criterion level on specific lessons and skills being taught as part of each teacher's weekly plan; (b) item analyses by classroom summarizing students' performance on specific test items; (c) lists showing pages in the textbook and other resources currently available in the school for teaching specific skills; and (d) individual student profiles showing the skills which a student has not mastered and/or are designated for his or her next instructional unit, and resources available in the school which teachers have determined are most valuable in teaching those skills. These resource lists are made available both for essential skills teaching and testing and for enrichment instruction.

4. Whole-class skill-development and -reinforcement through Title I resources. Associated with the Schoolwide Project, Title I instruction has been more systematically coordinated with regular classroom instruction. Where Title I labs previously functioned primarily to provide remedial instruction for very low achieving students, they now serve to provide systematic skill-development and -reinforcement instruction coordinated with the regular classroom. Students receive instruction in groups of fifteen at the reading and math labs. The regular classroom teachers and their aides observe this instruction so that introductory lessons, developmental and reinforcement activities, and testing are all continuously integrated. On Friday mornings, aides receive training to help them teach specific skills the following week.

The preceding description of interrelated instructional arrangements summarizes some of the ways in which 107th Street School faculty have tried to focus and coordinate their efforts to improve instruction. Principal Klentschy reports that the emphasis on teacher planning and staff development has greatly improved the administration's effectiveness in supervising instruction. He and other supervisors no longer are as easily perceived as intruders in the classroom; when he or another supervisor sits down with a teacher to discuss situations in which weekly and monthly data indicate questionable student progress, both participants have a concrete basis for identifying individual or class learning problems and their possible solution. Because teachers already have agreed with their peers at a given grade level concerning the skills to be taught each week, teachers are more inclined than before to see supervisors and other resource personnel as potential helpers rather than evaluators. Because the administration not only has provided a list of appropriate resources for teaching skills for which teachers already have agreed to be accountable but also provides aides and other assistance in obtaining and using these resources immediately, teachers are overcoming the traditional dysfunctional practice of pacing students slowly from the front through the end of a textbook. And the "old Title I program," according to Klentschy, "had so many packages that no one knew where anything was or what anyone else was doing. Our current arrangements," he adds, "now make it possible to monitor and coordinate the efforts of everyone in the school."[41]

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[41] Personal interview, June 11, 1981.

Fourth Street School in Los Angeles

The Fourth Street School serves a predominantly Hispanic population in an inner city neighborhood. All but a few of the 1,120 students enrolled in the Fall of 1980 were low-income students receiving free lunch assistance. The average percentages of reading skills mastered by Fourth Street students on the LAUSD Survey of Essential Skills in 1980 and 1981 were as follows:

Grade	1980	1981
1	79	79
2	72	79
3	56	66
4	68	63
5	69	74
6	77	79

It should be noted that the 1981 scores exceeded 1980 district-wide averages in the second, fifth, and sixth grades, and were only slightly under district averages in the remaining grades, even though Fourth Street ranks in the top ten percent of LAUSD schools in percentage of poverty students and all of its students receive subsidized lunches.[42]

Principal Gordon Wahlers has been at the Fourth Street School for only two years. After being appointed principal, Wahlers reorganized the entire school program on the principle that no previous practice or approach necessarily should be continued. All the resources and policies in the school were examined and reorganized in order to make it a more unified and effective institution. Some of the actions and arrangements that have been most important in effectuating this reorganization are described below:

1. Development of a staff manual as a comprehensive policy guide. The staff manual is addressed to and used by all the personnel in the building: teachers, paraprofessionals, college aides, resource persons, etc. Wahlers reports that use of the manual has freed the administration to work with instruction because much less time is spent responding to questions or problems one by one.

2. Identification of successful and/or promising approaches at other schools. Wahlers and his faculty have made an explicit effort to identify and introduce arrangements that appear to be yielding positive results at other inner city schools. Among the promising practices that have been identified and introduced or adapted are arrangements for staff development and curriculum alignment.

3. Scheduling to maximize grade-level planning and staff development. The school schedule has been explicitly worked out to maximize time for teacher

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[42] The median reading percentile of Fourth Street third graders on the CTBS in 1980 was at the 22nd percentile, and the median reading score of fifth graders was at the 28th percentile. These scores are relatively high for a predominantly-poverty school.

planning and staff development by grade level. Teachers meet for one-half hour twice a week by grade level, but many teams come early or stay after school to continue planning. Much of the emphasis in grade-level planning has been on curriculum alignment. Scheduling is made possible partly by assigning students to psychomotor skills classes supported through Title I.

4. Enrichment laboratories. Since Fourth Street participation in the Schoolwide Porject means that it need not follcw pullout arrangements, Title I resources can be used to operate enrichment labs in math, science, art, and special topics. High achieving students attend the labs for a longer period of time than do low achieving students, thus allowing for more concentrated instruction of the latter group in regular classrooms. This arrangement also alleviates some of the problems regular classroom teachers encounter in trying to provide enrichment for students who have mastered skills on which other students require corrective instruction. Opportunities for all students to participate in special-interest lab studies also have proved motivating for students.

5. Review teams and opportunity rooms for problem students. Learning opportunities and classroom environment in general at Fourth Street have been improved through the establishment of "review teams" to analyze problems of and arrangements for students who are disruptive or present other serious difficulties. A review team consists of the school psychologist, the principal, the school nurse, a special-education teacher, and the referring teacher. Review teams, which meet at 7:20 a.m. on Monday and throughout Thursday afternoon, may suggest instructional or management techniques to the classroom teacher, call in parents, recommend alternative classroom placements, refer students for ESL instruction, or take other steps to help the individual student. Students also may be placed indefinitely in an "opportunity room" where he or she receives more individual attention. Review teams also monitor student progress after initial diagnosis and prescription.

The object of a review team's work is to formulate an educational plan for the student. Review team members consult or meet with the opportunity room teacher, the bilingual coordinator, or others in a position to help formulate the best plan. It should be noted that the psychologist works closely with teachers as part of the review team approach, and thus spends relatively little time (compared to many other inner city schools) in testing students. In addition to serving as a staff development resource, he also works closely with many parents to help them understnad their child's behavior. Formal assessment by the psychologist is considered a last resort.[43]

6. Parent involvement and training. Parent involvement has placed particular stress on educational activities in support of instruction. Training sessions for parents frequently have been held on Saturdays, and have dealt with topics such as improvement of students' study skills and motivation.

7. Curriculum alignment and the resource center. Fourth Street School is one of ten elementary schools that participated in the Curriculum Alignment Project in 1980-81. A systematic effort was made to build and catalogue all resource center materials in terms of skills to be taught as specified in the grade-level correlation charts. Housed in a mobile classroom, the resource center is

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[43] A review team operates analogously to the Mental Health Team at an inner city school in New Haven in which this has been part of a successful effort to improve achievement. See James P. Comer, School Power (New York: Free Press, 1980).

relatively accessible to all faculty and now includes nearly all of the schools' printed and audiovisual materials. The Title I Curriculum Coordinator and paraprofessionals check out materials for teachers and try to make sure that appropriate material is immediately available. Wahlers reports that there has been a "dramatic increase" in the use of resource materials now that they are systematically organized in one location and are cross-referenced to specific learning skills, and that staff members are assigned to inform classroom teachers and help them obtain available materials.[44]

Huntington Drive School in Los Angeles

Huntington Drive Elementary School is located in a predominantly Hispanic, low-income neighborhood. In the Fall of 1980, 96 percent of its 838 students were eligible for free lunches. Principal Bud Bertrand has been at Huntington Drive for more than a decade and believes the school has made steady progress in improving the achievement of its predominantly low-income student body. The average percentages of reading and math skills mastered by Huntington Drive students on the LAUSD SES tests in 1980 and 1981 were as follows:

Grade	Reading		Math	
	1980	1981	1980	1981
2	67	73	83	87
3	57	63	68	68
4	66	69	68	76
5	62	73	60	67
6	63	66	55	60

It should be noted that Huntington Drive 1981 reading scores were at the district 1980 average for the fourth and fifth grades, and math scores exceeded the district average in the second, fourth, and fifth grades.[45]

Introduction of the Schoolwide Project at LAUSD inner city schools and other district programming changes have led to substantial modification in Huntington Drive's instructional and organizational processes and arrangements. Current arrangements which appear to be most responsible for recent improvements in instructional effectiveness are described below.

1. Utilization of resource teachers and paraprofessionals. Schoolwide funds have been used to hire three bilingual resource teachers each of whom works with two or three adjacent grade levels (i.e., K-2, 3-4, 5-6). Resource teachers provide assistance to regular classroom teachers and also provide instruction in the development of specific skills for low-achieving students. In general, a classroom teacher assigns seven or eight students one week at a time to the resource rooms. Resource teachers work very closely with classroom teachers and aides in identifying skills to be taught in the resource room or to be reinforced in the regular classroom. Because "low achievement" is consciously defined in terms of specific skills, all students receive assistance at one time or another in the resource rooms. Regular classroom teachers are required to provide resource teachers with a list of students and skills to be taught in the resource rooms at least one week in advance of placement in the resource rooms. Together,

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[44] Personal interview, June 9, 1981.

[45] The median reading percentile of Huntington Drive third graders on the CTBS in 1980 was at the 20th percentile, and the median reading score of FES fifth graders was at the 24th percentile.

the regular teacher and the resource teacher decide whether a student should continue a second week, and both keep records on skills mastered in the resource room.

Paraprofessionals funded through bilingual funds and other sources also are available in every classroom to help guide students in reinforcement lessons and to help provide individual assistance to students under the supervision of the classroom and resource teachers. Preparation and training of aides has been an important focus of concern at Huntington Drive, to the extent that the school at one time devised its own qualifying test for candidates and conducted formal in-service training when there was a good deal of turnover or many new aides being hired.

2. Assistance provided by the Title I coordinators and the retrieval (resource) center. Facilitated by Schoolwide Project reorganization which means that all students are eligible to receive Title I support services, Title I coordinators Tom Delagado and Maxine Lehmann provide assistance to all faculty including the regular classroom teachers and the resource teachers. Emphasis in their work during the past two years has been on providing staff development in connection with teaching LAUSD essential skills and its "balanced curriculum," and on coordinating utilization of teaching and testing materials in the school's retrieval room (i.e., teachers' resource center). In-service training sessions held before and after the academic year has placed particular stress on selection and teaching of the "key objectives" selected by grade-level meetings of Huntington Drive teachers and on teaching reading skills as part of each subject area. Delagado and Lehmann report that teachers were "delighted with this training because it helped them see how they could teach several skills at once"[46] within the district's specification of skills to be taught at each grade level. Grade-level meetings to specify and discuss teaching of essential skills have been held during the school day and also have been held after school using funds allocated at the discretion of the principal and the school's parent councils and advisory committees.

It should be noted that both staff development and instructional monitoring functions at Huntington Drive have been greatly facilitated by the school's physical arrangements. All third-through-sixth grade regular classrooms at Huntington Drive are in one relatively small, two-storied building that Principal Bud Bertrand and his staff designed after an earthquake destroyed the previous building. First-floor classrooms are on the perimeter of the building so that all have direct and open access to the library and other common space in the center, and second-floor classrooms, administrative offices, and the teachers' retrieval center (i.e., collections of teaching and testing materials) are all on the perimeter and connect to an inside walkway overlooking the first floor. A short stairway connects the two floors, and the overall arrangements make it simple for classroom teachers, administrators, and resource personnel to interact relatively informally all day long. Perhaps for this reason, Huntington Drive appears to have relatively few scheduled staff development sessions compared with other successful inner city schools, but teachers are constantly receiving staff development and other assistance throughout the day, and resource teachers as well as the Title I coordinators are well aware of what is taking place in the classroom and how teachers are using the retrieval center.

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[46] Personal interview, June 10, 1981.

3. Writing program. All students now write seven or eight short essays during the academic year, in either English or Spanish or both languages. The principal reads these essays and frequently writes encouraging comments before discussing them with students or posting them on bulletin boards.

4. Orientation to parents and the school community. Principal Bud Bertrand has placed great emphasis on involving parents in school committees and on helping to serve the needs of the schools' community. For example, parents are now serving on committees to improve the teaching of Spanish and to develop a transitional Spanish-to-English reading program. At times he has gone to great lengths to help make basic education courses available to residents of the community, to provide performing arts instruction which many parents believe helps acculturate their children, and to help improve traffic safety in the community. Bertrand believes that these activities are valuable in and of themselves, and also are necessary in maintaining community support for potentially controversial transitional bilingual instruction.

Overall, development of the LAUSD "balanced curriculum" with emphasis on teaching and testing essential skills appears to have helped bring about improvement of instruction at Huntington Drive. Implemented on a school-wide basis within reorganized arrangements that provide for continuing monitoring of instruction, staff development, and more assistance for low-achieving students, the instructional program is producing greater student mastery of essential skills.

Woodson South School in Chicago

Woodson South is a K-4 school located in an inner city neighborhood on Chicago's south side. David Helberg has been principal since 1968. Mean reading comprehension scores reached the following levels by 1980 and 1981:

Age Cycle	1980	1981
7	3.2	3.1
8	3.5	3.7
9	4.6	4.4

As indicated by these data, Woodson South fourth graders have had a mean reading score of 4.5 during the past two years, only two months below the national average of 4.7. Although Woodson South ranks 27th highest in Chicago in percentage of poverty students, reading achievement ranks about 250th among more than 500 elementary schools, and students are reading so well that only 15 percent are eligible for Title I. As a result Woodson South received only $42,000 through 1981 Title I funds and therefore its instructional program constitutes a largely school-wide approach for improving instruction. (The few students who are more than 1½ years below grade level are taught by a team of teachers and paraprofessionals who provide most of their academic instruction.) Instructional arrangements and processes associated with the high level of achievement at Woodson South are described below.

1. Faculty communication and decision-making regarding instructional design and implementation. Principal David Helberg has long been interested in instructional design and began working with teachers to reorganize arrangements for instruction shortly after his arrival. Following several years of work, the staff identified reading skill objectives to be taught at each grade. When the

central office later provided system-wide objectives and criterion-referenced tests, staff needed to make only minor modifications. Implementation of the reading program at Woodson South has placed considerable emphasis on internal faculty communication and on teacher participation in decision-making. Examples include the following:

a. Teachers meet by age cycle at least once a week. Grade level meetings, many attended by the principal, deal with a variety of issues such as selection of objectives and materials for instruction, grouping of students, and diagnosis of student learning problems. Teachers decide what materials they will use individually and throughout the grade, and how students will be distributed across classes, i.e., heterogeneously or homogeneously or some combination of these two approaches. Helberg believes that allowing teachers to select materials and determine grouping procedures by grade level makes it more likely that instruction will be enthusiastic and appropriate, provided that there is continual monitoring and supervision to identify and solve implementation problems as they occur.

b. Teachers meet frequently by adjacent grade levels to discuss and review skills to be taught and student progress in each cycle. For example, teachers of cycle 7 students meet with teachers of cycle 8 students to determine how well the school's instructional program is working across these two grades. Helberg has found that faculty response is more positive when teachers jointly identify skills that are being insufficiently mastered and are creating problems for other teachers later than when he communicates the same data or conclusions unilaterally.

One important result of the adjacent-level and grade-level meetings at Woodson South has been the identification of "Basic Must" skills that receive particular emphasis in classroom instruction. These skills, most of which are included within the Chicago Public Schools skills continuum, have been identified by Woodson South teachers as prerequisites for students' later success in school. In addition, Woodson South teachers have re-ordered some of the skills in the sequence specified in the continuum, in order to make sure that skills they have identified as prerequisite are adequately addressed in the classroom. It should be noted that insistence on mastery of the "Musts" sometimes has meant that Woodson South looked deficient on computer printouts showing student mastery of skills at Chicago schools at various points during the school year. Compared to other inner city schools, Woodson South students may appear to be lagging behind because initial emphasis is placed on mastery of skills that come later in the district sequence or are not well specified by the district. By the end of the year, however, Woodson South scores on criterion-referenced and standardized reading tests far exceed those at most other inner city schools in Chicago.

It also should be noted that Woodson South teachers provide input for decisions regarding the hiring of new faculty. Although there has been relatively little staff turnover during the past few years, occasional vacancies do occur, and Helberg believes it is important that his teachers help pick their colleagues because they must work so closely together in designing and implementing the instructional program at Woodson South. He further states that teacher participation in selection of new colleagues helps make both groups more accountable for the success of instruction and helps him identify the teaching skills and specialties which will be most beneficial to the school.[47]

2. Comparative monitoring of classroom progress. As at May School and

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[47] Personal interview, May 28, 1981

in District 19 schools in New York, emphasis is placed on preparing and analyzing data highlighting performance at the classroom level. Student performance monitored in this way includes not just achievement on standardized tests but also on specific skills assessed through criterion-referenced testing. These data are organized into charts allowing for comparisons of student performance across grade levels and between classes similar in student ability within and across grade levels and previous years. Student performance by classroom is then discussed in grade-level and adjacent grade-level teacher conferences, faculty meetings, teacher-administrator conferences, and at other meetings. Purposes of this type of monitoring include the following: (a) to identify "problem" classrooms in which students are making unsatisfactory progress; (b) to help teachers of low achieving classes see that similar students elsewhere in the school are making considerably more progress; and (c) to serve as a concrete basis for teacher and administrator discussions concerning possibilities for improving instruction.

3. Extensive but efficient recording and analysis of individual student progress. Along with monitoring of classroom progress, Woodson South teachers keep careful and detailed records on individual student progress in specific skill mastery. Having determined what objectives are to receive particular instructional emphasis and what materials are to be used throughout the academic year, Woodson South teachers record individual progress and use these data for subsequent decision-making and/or for discussion with other teachers and administrators. As at May School, a successful effort has been made to avoid unnecessary record-keeping and to resist the temptation to use complicated computerized or mechanical approaches that increase rather than reduce confusion and wasted time. Instead, Helberg devised a single color-coded chart which is easy to maintain and read and quickly provides teachers and administrators with information they need to assess student reading performance and improve instruction. Based on the Chicago skills continuum, this chart later was adopted for use in many other Chicago elementary schools.

In addition, Helberg also devised an arrangement for printing the Woodson South reading skills continuum on the inside front cover of each student's cumulative folder. Thus teachers enter data right on the folder rather than using the district's set of annual record cards, which are easily lost or misplaced and quickly constitute a formidable pile teachers must wade through to examine a student's previous learning history.

4. Student motivation and parent involvement in students' learning development. Arrangements aimed at motivating students and involving parents in working to improve student performance are far more systematic and extensive than is true at the vast majority of inner city elementary schools. Under the first heading, Woodson South arrangements include the following: (a) much of the school's discretionary budget and locally-raised funding is used to award students who make satisfactory progress and have good attendance. Awards most frequently used are school-imprinted tee shirts and pencils; (b) awards also are given to students in classes with good attendance, and students frequently write letters to their absent peers inquiring about their health and urging them to return to school as soon as possible. Arrangements under the second heading include (a) careful scheduling of open houses and parent visitation days several times a year to ensure that parents can sit down with their child's teacher to discuss his or her progress and ways the parent can help the child learn more in the future; (b) frequent communications which inform parents of

specific skills students are to master at various times during the school term. A special effort is made to inform and work with parents of students making unsatisfactory progress as soon as this becomes evident based on criterion-referenced testing. Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled twice during the academic year, and parent attendance at these conferences is now up to 80-85 percent.

5. Alternative arrangements for low achieving students. Because students who have not mastered skills required for later success are unlikely to benefit fully from instruction offered at the next grade level, Woodson South retains relatively large percentages of students at the end of the first, second, and third age cycles, within Chicago's policy specifying that students may be retained only twice in the first eight cycles. As mentioned above, students retained for very low achievement are placed in largely self-contained, small-size classes supported through Title I. This policy has led to the anomaly that Woodson South has relatively high achievement scores but has retained more students than many surrounding inner city schools with much lower achievement scores.

Related to retention policy, Woodson South has applied a promotions requirement specifying that a student must score eighty percent or more in reading comprehension skills before moving to the next grade. By way of contrast, system policy requires an eighty percent average across reading skills, so that a student can score ninety in vocabulary and ninety in spelling but only sixty in comprehension, and still be promoted. Recognizing that comprehension is particularly difficult to teach and test, and that there is a corresponding temptation for teachers to emphasize more mechanical skills in instruction and to give students the benefit of any doubt in testing, Helberg and other supervisors at Woodson South work closely with teachers to make sure that comprehension is taught well and is tested relatively rigorously.

Powell School in Chicago

Located on the South side of Chicago, Powell is a relatively new K-8 school which was built to accommodate a maximum of 750 students but now has more than 900 enrollment. Nearly all the students are black, and 65 percent were classified as poverty students in 1980. The student mobility rate (the number of students who enter, leave, or return after the 20th day divided by September enrollment) has been 35 to 40 percent in recent years.

Bernard Spillman, principal since the building opened in 1975, has worked with teachers to initiate a comprehensive effort at instructional improvement. It should be noted that community residents consider Powell to be both educationally and physically attractive, and there are parents from outside the immediate neighborhood who try to enroll their children there or place them on waiting lists for future admission. Reading achievement at Powell has been improving and reached the following levels in 1980 and 1981:

Age Cycle	1980	1981
7	2.6	3.1
8	3.3	3.2
9	4.0	4.0
10	4.8	4.6
11	5.2	5.6
12	6.6	6.2
13	7.3	7.4

Spillman's emphasis in instruction has been to try to provide appropriate individualized education for each child within Chicago's continuous progress approach for organizing elementary schools. "I don't like canned instruction," he says, "particularly where achievement is very low. Instruction should be by people, who must be sensitive to the needs of the student and the school. We do make use of canned materials and machines here, but we don't follow them lock-step. We pull available materials apart and find the best way to use them."[48]

As implied in this quotation, Powell faculty have aligned the school's curriculum and instruction, though they of course have not participated in the specific curriculum alignment in-service training being developed by SWRL and the Los Angeles Public Schools. As at Woodson South, Powell teachers have identified skills to be taught at each grade and then selected materials to teach these skills effectively. Reading and language arts are taught for two periods a day, and teachers draw heavily from the Ginn reading series, but they explicitly select appropriate material from within the readers and they search out or prepare other materials to teach specific skills. Arrangements and activities that appear to be particularly important in implementing the instructional program at Powell are described below:

1. The principal and other supervisors meet frequently with individual teachers and groups of teachers and visit classrooms regularly to assist the faculty in implementing the instructional program. Teachers prepare a list which shows the skills to be taught during the year to each reading group and also shows the initial reading level and targeted ending level for each student. Teachers then plan and record student progress on a weekly basis. The administration monitors instruction to make sure that reading groups are really organized and taught as described in the teachers' plans. The principal receives and studies teachers' weekly skill-implementation schedule and thus has concrete data to guide his classroom observations and teacher conferences.

2. Title I services are very closely coordinated with regular classroom instruction. In 1979-80, 117 primary students were in self-contained Title I classes for reading and language arts taught by instructional teams consisting of teachers, aides, and parent volunteers. The instructional approach in these classes was the same as in non Title I classes. In addition, 108 students were in pullout classes taught by teachers who are required to plan lessons based on information concerning students' skill needs which regular classroom teachers

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[48] Personal interview, May 29, 1981.

must provide the previous week. In addition, Title I staff are required to select and review all their materials in terms of their suitability for teaching the skills specified by the regular teacher. Spillman reports that this approach has worked well because Title I teachers know exactly what they are accountable for doing and regular classroom teachers cannot validly complain that Title I is taking students away from what they are supposed to be learning.

3. Many of the decisions at Powell are made at or on the basis of cabinet-type meetings attended by the school counselor, the assistant principal, Title I team leaders, and representatives of the parent council. Spillman feels that the advice and reactions of cabinet members have been invaluable in working out and refining arrangements for weekly lesson planning (see above), utilization of library and other resources, school-wide policies regarding student behavior, and other matters.

4. Great emphasis is placed both on discipline and motivation of students. Working closely with parents and community leaders, the administration established a discipline code which specifies, among other things, that students may not wear earrings or use lipstick. Adherence to the discipline code seems to have been important in building and retaining student and parent confidence in the quality of education available at Powell. Regarding motivation, emphasis includes the use of trophies and certificates to reward satisfactory or high performance, as well as buttons and stickers (e.g., "Powell's Pride--Perfect Attendance") to reward attendance. In addition, a school-wide system has been installed through which every classroom is assigned 100 points and classes are in competition to earn additional points. When demerits are given, students can choose a school service project to regain points for their class.

5. Parents are systematically involved in the schools' instructional program. Examples of this involvement include the following: (a) class and homework assignments are coded to show the skills which students are to master, and parents receive coding sheets so they will know the skills being emphasized. Resource materials at the neighborhood library have been organized so that parents can provide assistance in learning specific skills; (b) parents are allowed and encouraged to go anywhere in the school at any time. After becoming familiar with the school's instructional approach, parents who visit classes sometimes help the administration identify problems in the pacing of instruction and the utilization of instructional materials. Spillman believes that this policy also helps parents understand the difficult problems involved in raising student achievement; and (c) school policy is to assign homework every night, and parents as well as students are expected to tell the principal if this policy is not being followed or unproductive activities are being assigned.

Now that Principal Bernard Spillman and the faculty at Powell have aligned curriculum, initiated school-wide policies regarding discipline, homework, parent involvement, and other topics, and brought about substantial achievement gains, they are looking for ways to make further improvements. During the past year several teachers began to use the CMLRP for this purpose. Arrangements were made to duplicate some of the lessons and tests, and participating teachers reviewed many of the lessons in order to determine how they should fit within the schools' current skills continuum. Spillman plans to make a major effort in 1981-82 to introduce the CMLRP throughout the school.

V. Discussion of School-Level Arrangements and Processes for Improving Achievement at Inner City Elementary Schools

The preceding two chapters have described arrangements at Chicago, Los Angeles, and New York inner city elementary schools that have made substantial progress in improving the academic achievement of economically disadvantaged students. Based on short visits to these schools, we described instructional and organizational changes and emphases thst appeared to be most important in each of these school's efforts to improve achievement within a larger district framework emphasizing continuous-progress mastery learning (Chicago), the Chicago Mastery Learning Reading Program and a comprehensive approach to reading instruction (New York District 19), and school-wide approaches to implementing an aligned essential-skills curriculum (Los Angeles). Our brief case studies agreed with and, in fact, illustrate considerations previous research has indicated are critical for improving instruction at inner city schools.[49] In addition, we have tried to identify instructional and organizational arrangements and processes associated with successful inner city instruction in a more specific manner than is found in most of the literature on effective schools.

It should be noted that our short case studies were not meant to be exhaustive descriptions of processes and arrangements at the schools included in the study. For this reason, it should not be concluded that an emphasis described as important at one school but not another was not present at the second school; rather than describing--and repeating--every important area of emphasis at each school, we chose to highlight only a few that seemed most distinctive at a particular school. Thus the fact that "supportive" administration was mentioned in only a few of the case studies does not mean, for example, that it was not an important consideration at the others. The reader should keep this in mind in considering the discussion and generalizations in this chapter, which we will present under the following four headings: instructional processes and arrangements; organizational processes and arrangements; leadership characteristics and emphases; and concluding remarks.

Instructional Processes and Arrangements

All the schools we visited and described in the preceding chapters had six major instructional characteristics in common: curriculum and instruction were being explicitly and painstakingly aligned to improve the appropriateness of instruction in the classroom, with particular attention being paid to issues involving effective pacing of instruction; more effective arrangements had been introduced for dealing with the learning problems of low achieving students than usually are found in connection with Title I or other special compensatory education arrangements at inner city elementary schools;[50] and emphasis was placed on teaching higher-order cognitive skills; "assured availability" of teaching resource materials; minimal record-keeping for teachers; and improving the quality of homework and parent involvement in students' learning.

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[49] For example, critical factors such as outstanding leadership, focused instruction, and high expectations which have been identified by Ronald Edmonds and his colleagues are apparent in our school descriptions. See Ronald Edmonds, *op. cit*.

With respect to curriculum alignment, Los Angeles elementary schools either were participating fully in the Curriculum Alignment Project (107th Street, Fourth Street) or were aligning objectives, instruction, and testing less formally through intensive staff development and supervision (Huntington Drive), and Chicago and New York District 19 schools either were achieving a degree of alignment through introduction of and emphasis on the CMLRP and related staff development (May, P.S. 174, P.S. 224, P.S. 214) or through years of staff development focusing on selection and correlation of learning objectives, teaching, and assessment of student performance (Woodson South, Powell).

With respect to special arrangements for low achieving students, all of the schools were effectively targeting resources to help their most educationally retarded students through a school-wide effort that eliminated or minimized the dysfunctional aspects of pullout instruction. In the case of District 19 schools, this was done largely by systematically coordinating federal, state, and local resources for compensatory education and devising parallel instruction and related arrangements (e.g., use of the CMLRP in both regular and parallel classes, introduction of a school-wide writing program) for the lowest achieving students. This approach also has the virtue of reducing the class size, usually by one-half, of regular classroom teachers who are assigned the lowest achieving reading group within a particular grade. In the case of the Chicago and Los Angeles schools, arrangements for eliminating or minimizing negative pullout effects varied with the school, but each had worked out arrangements other than the modal Title I pattern in which the lowest achieving students are temporarily removed from the regular classroom for instruction that frequently is not well coordinated with that in the regular class. Los Angeles schools were in a particularly advantageous position to alter typical Title I arrangements because of their participation in the Schoolwide Project, and both the Los Angeles and the Chicago schools had found it relatively easy to work out productive Title I arrangements because both Los Angeles and Chicago give local schools more options in choosing Title I activities than is true in many other big cities.

With respect to greater emphasis on teaching higher-order cognitive skills, the Chicago mastery learning reading materials with learning strategies are specifically designed to make this happen, and the Curriculum Alignment Project helps teachers identify and overcome the problems associated with basal readers and other textbooks that teach reading comprehension, math problem-solving, and other relatively abstract skills poorly or not at all. Perhaps the best example of emphasis placed on higher-order skills among the schools in this study was at Woodson South in Chicago, where students are required to score eighty percent in mastery of comprehension skills even though many inner city schools in Chicago with much lower achievement do not set a specific reading comprehension standard for promotion to the next grade.

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[50] A study of "overachieving" and "underachieving" elementary schools in Florida indicated that teachers in the latter schools were more likely to feel that "adequate provisions had not been made for students with special reading problems" than were teachers in the overachieving schools. See Lynn J. Stoll, "Reading Program Administration: Does It Make A Difference?" Administrator's Notebook, v. 27, no. 3 (1978-79), p. 3.

By "assured availability" of teaching resources, we mean that schools in our study had instituted more specific measures than we have seen in most schools to make sure that appropriate instructional resources are easily available to teachers. Actions to assure resource availability took a variety of forms such as assigning resource personnel and/or aides the task of providing teachers with enrichment or corrective materials appropriate for a given classroom, duplicating testing materials and delivering them in sufficient quantity to the classroom, and making arrangements for parents or college students to assist in materials preparation and delivery to individual teachers. Schools participating in the CMLRP had resource personnel who delivered mastery-learning teaching and testing materials to the classroom teacher, and 107th Street School had computerized correlation charts produced in the Curriculum Alignment Project in order to provide teachers with an immediate listing of resources for teaching specific skills to specific children. Many of the schools also had established or reorganized teachers' resource centers so that all the materials available in the school were keyed (i.e., color coded or otherwise designated) to specific essential skills. Unusual emphasis also was placed on assigning trained aides to tasks that helped make appropriate instructional materials immediately available to the teacher.[51] One major result of these efforts was that faculty no longer could legitimately say that obtaining appropriate materials was too burdensome a responsibility for a busy classroom teacher.

With respect to minimal record-keeping for teachers, all the schools in this study in one way or another had acted to minimize the teacher's burden in collecting and maintaining data required for a mastery-oriented learning approach. The CMLRP was, in part, explicitly designed to reduce the burdensome record-keeping tasks inherent in Chicago's continuous-progress mastery curriculum, and beyond that administrators at District 19 schools and at May School took great pains to minimize teachers' record-keeping responsibilities in connection with the CMLRP. Among schools that had established other school-wide approaches and arrangements, this goal also was particularly salient at Woodson South, where Principal David Helberg devised simple arrangements for keeping good records, and at 107th Street School, where the computer was put to good advantage after curriculum had been aligned and "assured availability" support services had been carefully arranged.

With respect to improving the quality of homework and parent involvement in student learning, to a significant degree this was being accomplished either by implementation of the CMLRP, which specifies reading skills to be learned in a manner that can help parents understand how they can facilitate homework and other learning reinforcement activities, and/or by introduction of an aligned curriculum which can help parents identify essential skills and understand how their children are progressing in skill mastery.

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[51] This conclusion is compatible with a recent review of research summarizing as follows the conditions that appear to be necessary for the successful use of classroom aides: classroom management must be designed to take advantage of their presence; they must receive training in the tasks they are to perform; and they must be literate. See P. Schuetz, The Instructional Effectiveness of Classroom Aides. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Learning Research and Development Center, 1980.

More than merely introducing the CMLRP and/or an aligned curriculum, however, nearly all the schools we described in this paper were actively encouraging and assisting parents to find ways to help their children master essential skills, particularly with respect to homework. At the Powell School in Chicago, for example, parents received information that related local library resources to essential skills and homework assignments. May School parents are encouraged to provide the administration with feedback about unproductive homework assignments, 107th Street School parents receive regular computerized mailings describing their children's performance on essential skills, Fourth Street parents participate in Saturday workshops on topics involving facilitation of learning, Woodson South parents are notified as soon as a child begins to make unsatisfactory progress, and all District 19 parents receive booklets describing and explaining various aspects of that district's comprehensive reading program. There are many ways, one can conclude, through which successful inner city schools involve parents in helping to improve their children's mastery of essential skills.

Organizational Processes and Arrangements

Schools described in the preceding chapters exemplified three major characteristics involving organizational processes and arrangements: instructional planning emphasized grade-level decision-making; supervision had become much more outcome-based; and comparative monitoring of student progress was emphasized as part of the decision-making progress in many of the schools.

With respect to grade-level planning of instruction, it should first be noted that our study reinforces much recent analysis and research pointing to building-centered staff development as the key level for effective in-service training. Neale, Bailey, and Ross, for example, recently surveyed the literature on school improvement strategies and concluded that in-service training should be "located in the local school building, directed by the principal and staff of that building to meet educational needs identified by the staff and clientele of that school."[52] All the schools described in this study placed intensive and on-going emphasis on building-level staff development to the extent that this was virtually a defining characteristic of their mode of functioning. District 19 schools had a full-time Resident Trainer, two of the Los Angeles schools were participating in the Curriculum Alignment Project which provides school-wide staff development, and all the schools conducted a wide range of staff development activities initiated by the principal or other resource personnel or the teachers themselves.

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[52] Daniel C. Neale, William J. Bailey, and Billy E. Ross, Strategies for School Improvement (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1981), p. 199.

Even more specific than the emphasis on building-level staff development, furthermore, was the centrality of grade-level and adjacent-grade-level instructional planning at most of the schools described in the study. Instructional decision-making carried out by a group of teachers at a given grade is probably the most important organizational arrangement in the Curriculum Alignment Project, and grade-level instructional planning also was a key consideration at Woodson South in Chicago, where teachers meet weekly to help make all types of instructional decisions including the assignment of students to classes and the selection of textbook for each grade. At schools where grade-level meetings were relatively less frequent, such as P.S. 214 in New York and Huntington Drive in Los Angeles, resource personnel such as Title I coordinators serve as an almost omnipresent link between teachers within and across adjacent grade levels.

Throughout this study we noted that grade-level planning was an important consideration in working out effective day-to-day instructional methods to teach mastery-oriented approaches such as are exemplified in the CMLRP in New York District 19 or the essential skills curriculum in Los Angeles. Critical decisions concerning what to teach and how to teach groups of students are made constantly at any elementary school, and these decisions of course are particularly critical at inner city schools where many students lag far behind adequate achievement levels. Working together in grade-level or adjacent grade-level teams, teachers can help each other--and, in a sense, demand more of each other--in making more effective instructional decisions. In addition, grade-level planning and decision-making also give teachers the opportunity to participate in a very meaningful way in the larger school change and improvement process. Participation of teachers in key decisions about instruction has long been recognized as an indispensable element in successful school improvement projects. Reviewing the research on successful innovation, for example, Patrick Fleming recently concluded that "User participation in the decision-making process is a commonly cited variable in successful innovation implementation. Teacher participation in the decision-making process is central to both organizational administration and the planned change process."[53]

Lest it be maintained that the CMLRP or other mastery-learning approaches necessarily stifle teachers' creativity or leave them little or no room for instructional planning either individually or by grade, we want to re-emphasize that these approaches require a good deal of professional judgement and knowledge on the part of classroom teachers. This generalization is obviously true in the case of individualized mastery learning approaches, and it is no less true with regard to the group-based CMLRP approach:

> While the teacher manuals in the CMLRP include a guide into initial instruction that is a 'script,' teachers do not have to use them verbatim unless they wish to do so. . . . the teacher may decide to spend more or less time on any one than on another, according to class needs. Finally, the program does not mandate particular reading materials. Teachers are free to select materials of appropriate interest levels and can be sensitive to the cultural character-

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[53] Patrick J. Fleming, Inservice Education and Planned Educational Change: A Review and Critique of the Literature. Madison, Wi.: Wisconsin Research and Development Center for Individualized Schooling, 1980, p. 18.

istics of their classes in selecting reading materials.[54]

We also want to emphasize that grade-level planning requires and encourages participation that is both active and continuing. Much has been written concerning the pros and cons of "top-down" vs. "bottoms up" planning, but discussion on this topic frequently misses the point that quality and quantity in "grass-roots" participation probably are more important than whether initiative starts at the top or bottom and then proceeds up or down. We believe that grade-level teacher participation and decision-making regarding instructional planning and implementation played an important part in developing commitment to the mastery-oriented instructional approaches described in this paper.

With respect to outcome-based supervision, introduction of the CMLRP in some of the schools in our study and of an aligned curriculum with detailed grade-level and individual-teacher planning for the teaching of specified essential skills had focused supervision much more clearly on concrete questions and data than generally is true in most elementary schools, whether inner city or not. Because the CMLRP is structured to provide information on student mastery for teachers, supervisors, and other resource personnel, supervisory conferences centered more than usually was true before on concrete issues involving the improvement of instruction. Because curriculum alignment carried out in the context of a district-wide list of essential skills for each grade and criterion-referenced tests for assessing mastery of these skills provide data more useful than most schools now have for diagnosing and prescribing solutions to students' learning problems, supervisory conferences could center on questions involving the effectiveness of instruction rather than on broad discussion of deficiencies in students, materials, or teachers. "What materials can we find to improve the teaching of topic sentences among students who did not master this skill in Mastery Level K?" "How can we accelerate the pacing of comprehension instruction for five students in Mastery Level C?" and "How can we obtain more tests to assess student performance after corrective instruction on making inferences?" were the kinds of questions teachers and supervisors were addressing together at the schools in this study. By way of contrast, supervisory conferences at schools we have visited in the past more typically dealt with broader questions such as "Where can we find better materials to teach reading?" "Where can we find materials students will be more interested in?" and "Why can't these children learn?"

It should be noted that "data-based" supervision of the kind we found in the schools in this study has been gaining increasing support nationally under the theme of "clinical" supervision. In fact, most of the schools we visited could serve as models for a cyclical clinical supervision process in which a teacher discusses instructional goals with the supervisor at a pre-observation conference, the supervisor then collects data on goal attainment through actual classroom observation, and the data are discussed at a post-observation conference at which the teacher and supervisor share ideas for improvement of instruction.[55]

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[54] Ryan and Schmidt, op. cit., p. 84.

[55] See W. John Smyth, "The Principalship and the Development of Instructional Expertise." Draft copy of a paper presented for a course on Resource Management in Schools, Deakin University, Victoria Australia, 1980, p. 25.

It also should be noted that the mastery-oriented instructional approaches described in this paper share an emphasis on outcome-based (OB) supervisory assistance with other mastery-learning approaches to improvement of instruction. One recent generalization that has been made with regard to outcome-based instructional management is that criterion-referenced tests such as are provided by the CMLRP, the Chicago continuous-progress reading curriculum, and the Los Angeles essential-skills curriculum can provide an improved basis for monitoring instruction.[56]

With respect to comparative monitoring of student progress, we found that many of the schools in the study were charting student performance and progress on a class-by-class basis and using this information to set minimum goals for introduction and pacing of lessons and materials. Collection and analysis of these data seemed to be particularly important with regard to low achieving students, because this type of monitoring helped teachers of relatively low achieving reading groups see that some were progressing more rapidly than others and led to re-examination of instructional procedures and techniques for low achieving students. Comparative monitoring of student progress was particularly evident at Woodson South in Chicago, where charts showing the performance of groups of students within classes were used as a basis for discussion at grade-level and faculty meetings and at teacher-supervisor conferences.

It is true that comparative monitoring of student progress can be threatening to teachers and can be misused in a simple-minded way to reach facile conclusions about the ability or performance of teachers. Administrators at Woodson South and several other schools in this study were well aware of this danger and were trying to use comparative monitoring of student progress as a basis for instructional program review and revision rather than a club to pounce upon "bad" teachers. On the other hand, these administrators also were aware that comparative monitoring can serve to highlight and thereby reward the success of teachers whose students are making good progress.

Leadership Characteristics and Emphases

Outstanding leadership, usually on the part of a building principal, has long been recognized as an indispensable prerequisite in accounting for the success of an unusually effective school.[57] Examples of outstanding administrative leadership at both the building and the district or sub-district level were provided throughout this paper in descriptions of organizational and instructional processes and arrangements that appear to account for the success of the schools in the study. We will not try to review or repeat all the aspects of administrative leadership that were described in the preceding pages, but instead will call attention to two particularly important characteristics that were apparent at all the schools.

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[56] Leslie Salmon-Cox, "A Comment on Outcome Based Management, Assessment, and the Role of the Teacher," Outcomes. A Quarterly Newsletter of the Network for Outcome Based Schools, v. 1, no. 1 (Spring 1981), p. 16.

[57] E.g., see Why Do Some Urban Schools Succeed?, op. cit.

First, administrators were both supportive of teachers and skilled in providing a structured institutional pattern in which teachers could function effectively. Examples of supportive leadership included attention paid to school security consideration in District 19 and at other schools, careful (but informal) accounting such that extra time volunteered by teachers was "paid back" to the extent possible at P.S. 174 and other schools, and provision of opportunities for teachers to have additional "breathing time" as necessary at many of the schools. Supportive administration, however, was embodied not so much in any single policy or action on the part of administration, but even more by a pervasive concern for the problems teachers face every day in the school and an orientation to perceive problems and respond with understanding of the teacher's point of view.

Examples of skill in providing structured institutional patterns included efforts that were made to clarify school policies and regulations as at Fourth Street School, introduction of effective school-wide arrangements for low achieving students at all the schools in the study, and structuring of communications and policies to involve parents more intensively in their children's learning. Some of the administrative leadership acts described in the preceding pages seemed to be equally concerned with providing an effective institutional structure and providing additional support for teachers. Examples under this latter heading included efforts described above to minimize teachers' recordkeeping and alternative arrangements that were established in several of the schools to provide special help or intervention services to problem students.

Of course, it was no surprise to find that building principals and other administrators working with the schools in our study provided leadership that was both structured and supportive. Decades of research and analysis on organizational effectiveness have indicated that both these dimensions of leadership are important in determining the success of an organization, whether one uses these terms specifically or instead substitutes others such as "consideration" and "structure" or "person-oriented" and "institution-oriented."[58]

Second, administrators of the schools in this study were willing and able to interpret rules in a manner that enhanced rather than reduced the effectiveness of their institutions. In many cases this meant that rules and regulations were "bent" to the point that they were mangled or broken, or at least might have been perceived as such by administrators or officials at a higher organization level. For obvious reasons we will not give specific examples of adaptation or modification of rules that were somewhat freely interpreted with a view to improving the effectiveness of schools in the study, but we do want to emphasize that higher-level administrators generally seemed tolerant or even supportive of rule adaptations that might well have been questioned in a rigid bureaucratic hierarchy. One principal whom we interviewed referred to such adaptations as "creative administration," and another said that "There is no way the central office can prevent me from interpreting rules so they are effective in this school. Our parents wouldn't stand for it because their children are learning." In general these and other statements were reminiscent of those obtained from principals more than ten years ago in a previous study of effective inner city schools in Chicago.[59]

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[58] E.g., see Paul Hersey and Kenneth H. Blanchard, Management of Organizational Behavior: Utilizing Human Resources, 3rd ed. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1977.

Concluding Remarks

Having delineated organizational and instructional processes and arrangements that appear to be associated with improved reading achievement at inner city schools, we will conclude with several brief comments regarding approaches to improving schools in general and inner city schools in particular.

First, all of the schools described in this study were utilizing one or another type of mastery-learning approach to instruction with a related emphasis on outcome-based management, and were working out instructional and organizational processes and arrangements to implement these approaches effectively. In effect, they were addressing problems that William Spady and other observers have identified as a critical need for curriculum and instructional reorganization and coordination to make sure that the current thrust toward minimal comeptency testing (MCT) and competency-based education (CBE) places adequate emphasis on the development of higher-order competencies rather than lower-order minima:

> Real CBE programs are 'based' on goals and 'driven' by assessment. This means that decisions about what to do programmatically with individual students are based on continual assessments of how they are progressing in relation to goals relevant to them, and further grouping, assignment, and/or placement in relation to those goals is done when their development and performance indicate it is appropriate. . . . the competency movement takes on a particularly enigmatic character. It is largely an add-on MCT program which seeks to identify and remediate youngsters whose reading and math skills are not developing 'on schedule.' There is little in the way of curricular re-thinking, instructional reorganization, better day to day pedagogical/assessment/assignment procedures, improvements in the way in which teachers and administrators do and coordinate their work, or abandonment of the Carnegie

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[59] Russell C. Doll, Variations Among Inner City Elementary Schools. Kansas City, Mo.: Center for the Study of Metropolitan Problems in Education, 1969.

> Unit. . . . The real question which CBE forces us to ask is whether we are willing to transform our structures and procedures so that we have a better chance of both accomplishing and documenting our goals, or whether we will continue to maintain the institutional forms we now have and continue to live with vague and variable results. . . . Fundamental organizational change does not come easily, and real CBE cannot be bought at a cheaper price.[60]

Second, the change processes that characterized the schools in this study exemplified several different approaches for introducing instructional innovation into schools. More specifically, Virginia Koehler has identified four distinct "models of teacher change" which have been derived from classroom research on effective schools: (1) "change teachers by changing their behaviors: the process/product approach," which is exemplified by training and utilization of direct instruction techniques to maximize student time on task; (2) "change teachers by changing the structure," which is exemplified in structural arrangements such as state minimum testing programs; (3) "change teachers by providing them with an understanding of their decision making processes, their language, etc., and the consequences of their decisions, language, etc.," which is exemplified in various in-service arrangements such as when teachers discuss videotapes of their lessons or are provided with better information to participate in instructional decision-making; and (4) "change the teacher by changing the school: The Effective Schools Approach," an approach which postulates that it is "the collectivity [i.e., the school] which must be changed if the individual teachers are to change, or if that change is to be sustained." Koehler points out that there has been "little in-depth research" on the school change approach, and that at this time "It is not clear what the school level change process would be. It could, in fact, be a district policy decision related to the implementation of a diagnostic/prescriptive competency based program with a built-in testing program . . . This is an area, however, which requires more work."[61]

Change efforts we described in this paper dealt in various ways with all four of Koehler's teacher change models. The CMLRP, for example, apparently functions to bring about more successful student performance, thereby rewarding and reinforcing teacher behavior changes associated with effective implementation. Changing structural arrangements were embodied in definitions and requirements for minimal student mastery of specific skills, and in school-wide structural changes to focus instructional resources more effectively on low achieving students. Changing teacher behavior through participation in decision-making about instruction was facilitated through grade-level and adjacent-grade-level planning and through outcome-based, clinical-type supervision in which teachers and resource personnel discussed specific instructional strategies. And thorough-going, school-wide reform and staff development were practically defining characteristics of the schools in this study.

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[60] William Spady, "Competency Based Education: Maximum Confusion, Minimum Implementation," The School Administrator, July-August 1979, pp. 20-21.

[61] Virginia Koehler, "Effective Schools Research and Teacher Change." Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Los Angeles, April 1981, pp. 2, 4, 5, 7, 10-11.

Koehler also concludes that "The strongest evidence to date suggests that a school level factor which creates the opportunity for teachers and administrators to talk about teaching, to experiment and observe each other, is important. This certainly would be one mechanism for providing teachers with a language to think and talk about their own classroom practices (Change Model No. 3). There may, however, be other mechanisms for accomplishing this."[62] Introduction of the CMLRP and/or the Curriculum Alignment Project combined with systematic staff development arrangements (e.g., a full-time Resident Trainer, curriculum alignment in-service sessions and grade-level planning) provided examples of such mechanisms for bringing about productive problem-solving and instructional change among teachers and administrators at the schools we described above.

Koehler further suggests that the most effective teacher change approach may be one which begins at the school level and then utilizes appropriate strategies with individual teachers and groups of teachers: "We would then have a hierarchical change model which begins with school factors and moves toward individual teacher change, using one, two, or three of the teacher change strategies, depending upon individual need."[63] Our portrayal in this study of school-based change efforts coordinated with larger district efforts and more micro internal change efforts is compatible with this view or even with a larger theory that might spell out relationships between district or sub-district level change, school-level change, and within-school change. Our description of New York District 19 efforts and the Los Angeles district-wide approach which provided schools and teachers with a structured "handle" to facilitate building-level improvement would fit well within such a theory, and we already have pointed out that the right top-down requirements appear to be effective when they also provide for "grass-roots" teacher participation in grade-level and classroom decision-making. Specification of the elements and dynamics of this type of theory, however, requires additional research examining a variety of arrangements for combining elements of both top-down and bottoms-up planning and implementation of change in other school districts.

Third, the instructional and organizational approaches and arrangements we described in this paper may point the way toward more widespread and rapid improvement of inner city schools than many concerned observers heretofore have thought possible. At the conclusion of Chapter II we pointed out that full-scale Organization Development approaches in which faculty re-examine their educational philosophy and develop a high level of skill in "problem solving, communication, collaboration, participation, trust, and uncovering and confronting conflict"[64] prior to reforming instruction may not work in big city school districts which lack time and money to implement this approach and which function in a turbulent environment. The difficulties inherent in trying to fundamentally reform big city schools--or any sizable group of schools, for that matter--have led many to despair concerning the prospects for widespread improvement in the inner city. Stephen Miller recently posed the underlying issue involved as follows:

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[62] Ibid., p. 11.

[63] Ibid., p. 12.

[64] Michael Fullan, Matthew B. Miles, and Gib Taylor, op. cit., p. 5.

> . . .'Does there exist a large number of low income schools . . . which we must write off as to the possibility of improving school learning climate and raising achievement?' That prospect is dismal; there are far too many schools in low SES communities where achievement is low and the learning climate is far too typical. Unfortunately, many researchers on educational change suggest that change agents only attempt innovations in schools which are 'ready' for change. . . . Perhaps we will have to qualify our ending with the statement, At this time there may be some schools which are not ready for or are unwilling to change. But . . . even public schools respond to inevitable outside pressures for change. Maybe an aroused public demanding high achieving, high quality schools for all children is the answer.[65]

Miller, Wilbur Brookover, Ronald Edmonds, and others are developing approaches for improving school learning climates and other factors that may raise the achievement of students at inner city schools. At the present time, however, it is not known whether or to what extent the positive learning climate found at successful inner city schools causes or reflects high achievement or can be introduced effectively at other schools less "ready" for change.[66]

Keeping this uncertainty in mind, we believe that some of the instructional and organizational arrangements described in this paper can be introduced and implemented effectively in a large number of schools, and that doing so can help generate a more positive school climate and improved student learning. This is particularly the case with respect both to the CMLRP, which can be viewed as a content technology to improve teaching and learning, and to Curriculum Alignment in-service training, which can be viewed as a process technology to improve curriculum and instruction. Of course neither of these approaches nor any other will work unless they are implemented well, but they do provide a means to improve the performance of teachers and students and, hence, to improve school climate and reverse the typical syndrome of failure and frustration found in so many inner city schools. From this point of view, the CMLRP, the Curriculum Alignment Project, and the Schoolwide Project under ESEA Title I represent a means to bring about incremental school improvement at a large number of inner city schools.[67]

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[65] Stephen Miller, "Changing the School Learning Climate: Overcoming Resistance to Change," The Generator, v. 11, no. 3 (Spring 1981), p. 17.

[66] Ibid., p. 16.

[67] We are contrasting incremental school improvement with the kind of fundamental school reform we described at Woodson South and Powell Schools in Chicago. Both these schools had worked out unusually effective instructional programs over a period of five-to-ten years. Fundamental school improvement may aim at individualization, instruction based on learning styles, or other relatively esoteric goals that require total reorganization of the school and faculty.

Fourth, our conclusions that change strategies can originate from the central office and still provide for effective implementation at the building level (#2 above), and that this can lead to incremental improvement in many parts of a big city district (#3 above) indicate that district-level initiative and monitoring represent a key element in the reform of urban schools. Particularly when district innovations lend themselves to monitoring and evaluation, as was true with respect to New York District 19 arrangements for introducing the CMLRP and Los Angeles efforts to provide school faculties with better data for assessing their own performance (using the Survey of Essential Skills and A Balanced Curriculum), promising approaches to curriculum and instruction may be implemented more effectively in the future than has been true in the past. In effect, the kinds of district- and school-level arrangements and processes we described in sections of this report dealing with District 19 and with Los Angeles school-wide efforts may help to overcome problems such as those Cohen and Miller believe hamper the attainment of accountability in big city schools:

> Put very simply, if the principal does not really control instruction through any formal process of evaluation, how can he or she be made accountable by rigorous outside pressure and inspection? . . . It looks as if there are a number of ECE [Early Childhood Education program] principals floundering about without the knowledge of coordination strategies and the kinds of supervision necessary to solve the problems of new educational technology. The teachers do not see these principals as supportive of their efforts.
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> One can be most sympathetic with these principals; the administration urges them to be a 'climate leader.' As we have measured the concept of climate leadership, it does indeed have a critical relationship to decision-making effectiveness. . . . However, it is not sufficient to manage decision-making without coordination and some other kinds of supervision of instruction and evaluation of teachers.[68]

In this context, it is appropriate to call attention to a district-school linkage mechanism which is being developed in Administrative Area 3 in Los Angeles. Based on the initiative of Area Superintendent Phil Jordan, principals of the 47 schools in Area 3 are now working as part of and with teams of their colleagues to review, discuss, and assess alternative arrangements and processes for improving instruction. This approach was initiated following nine days of in-service training focusing on instructional change in which Area 3 principals participated during the Summer of 1980. During the 1980-81 school year principals visited each other's schools and discussed ways to adapt instructional and organizational arrangements and processes that were being tried elsewhere for use in their own school. District-office administrators believe this activity is helping to stimulate more effective implementation of the LAUSD essential skills approach at many of the schools in Area 3.

Fifth, it should be noted that arrangements and processes described in this report were consistently concerned with the problems and reactions of the classroom teacher. For example, the CMLRP is designed to make it easier for teachers to group and instruct students, school-wide approaches are intended in part to reduce disruption and record-keeping, and curriculum alignment seeks to make the teacher's job more manageable and rewarding. Had this generalization not held, it is doubtful that achievement gains would have been registered in the schools we described.

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[68] Elizabeth G. Cohen and Russell H. Miller, Increased Accountability and the Organization of Schools. Palo Alto, Ca.: Stanford University Institute for Research on Educational Finance and Governance, 1979, NIE-G-78-0212, pp. 9, 22-23.

Sixth, the arrangements and processes described in this report functioned in an inter-related manner to help inner city schools get off "dead center." All the schools we described, for example, grouped students homogeneously to some extent for reading instruction, but homogeneous grouping (part-time) seemed to be more successful than is frequently true because it seldom involved pulling students out of their regular classrooms, grouping based on essential skills provided "better" homogeneity than is true with basal readers, and materials being used decreased rather than magnified low self-image among slower students. By implementing relatively effective arrangements for homogeneous instruction in reading, the schools described above had moved beyond the common situation in which advocates of homogeneous and heterogeneous grouping immobilize each other by pointing out difficulties in the other position. Nearly all elementary schools group students homogeneously part of the time for reading and other basic skills, but the schools described in Chapters III and IV generally were doing this more effectively than is usual through their emphasis on school-wide, outcome-based approaches to compensatory education.

Finally, we want to stress that the instructional and organizational arrangements and processes described in this report must be meshed with each other and adapted to the individual school building if they are to improve achievement at inner city schools. It would be easy enough, for example, to pass out CMLRP materials to teachers throughout a school or school district, or to mandate grade-level curriculum-alignment training and planning for all teachers, but actions of this sort probably would have little long-range impact unless accompanied by appropriate support services and outcome-based supervision, school-wide arrangements targeting some resources effectively on the problems of low achieving students, and "creative" (i.e., risk-taking) administration on the part of building principals. When these and other interrelated arrangements and processes are well coordinated, on the other hand, inner city schools will be both more consistent and more consistently effective than they have been in the past.

Several years ago Venezky and Winfield identified "consistency of instruction" as a key variable accounting for the success of unusually effective inner city elementary schools. "Reading, like math and several other curricular subject," they concluded, "involves a continual development of competencies that stretch acorss the entire elementary grades. If the skills taught at each grade level and the approaches used to teach these skills were selected independently by each teacher, the chances are increased for either wasted time through unnecessary repetition or confusion and frustration through missing prerequisites."[69]

We agree with this conclusion, but we also believe that "consistency" should be defined much more broadly than with reference only to instruction. As a key variable accounting for the success of unusually effective inner city schools, "consistency" embraces not just instruction across grade levels but also coordination between instruction and supervision through outcome-based monitoring and management, involvement of parents in the schools' instructional program and in activities to improve their children's learning, and administrative leadership providing support and structure to enhance teaching and learning. When all these elements are in place and coordinated, as one of the principals we interviewed summarized it, "Then the student knows what should be done, the teacher knows, the parent knows, and the principal knows. Together we can accomplish a great deal to improve students' learning."

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[69] Richard L. Venezky and Linda Winfield, Schools That Succeed Beyond Expectations in Teaching Reading. Newark, Delaware: University of Delaware, Department of Educational Studies Technical Report No. 1, August 1979, p. 32.

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